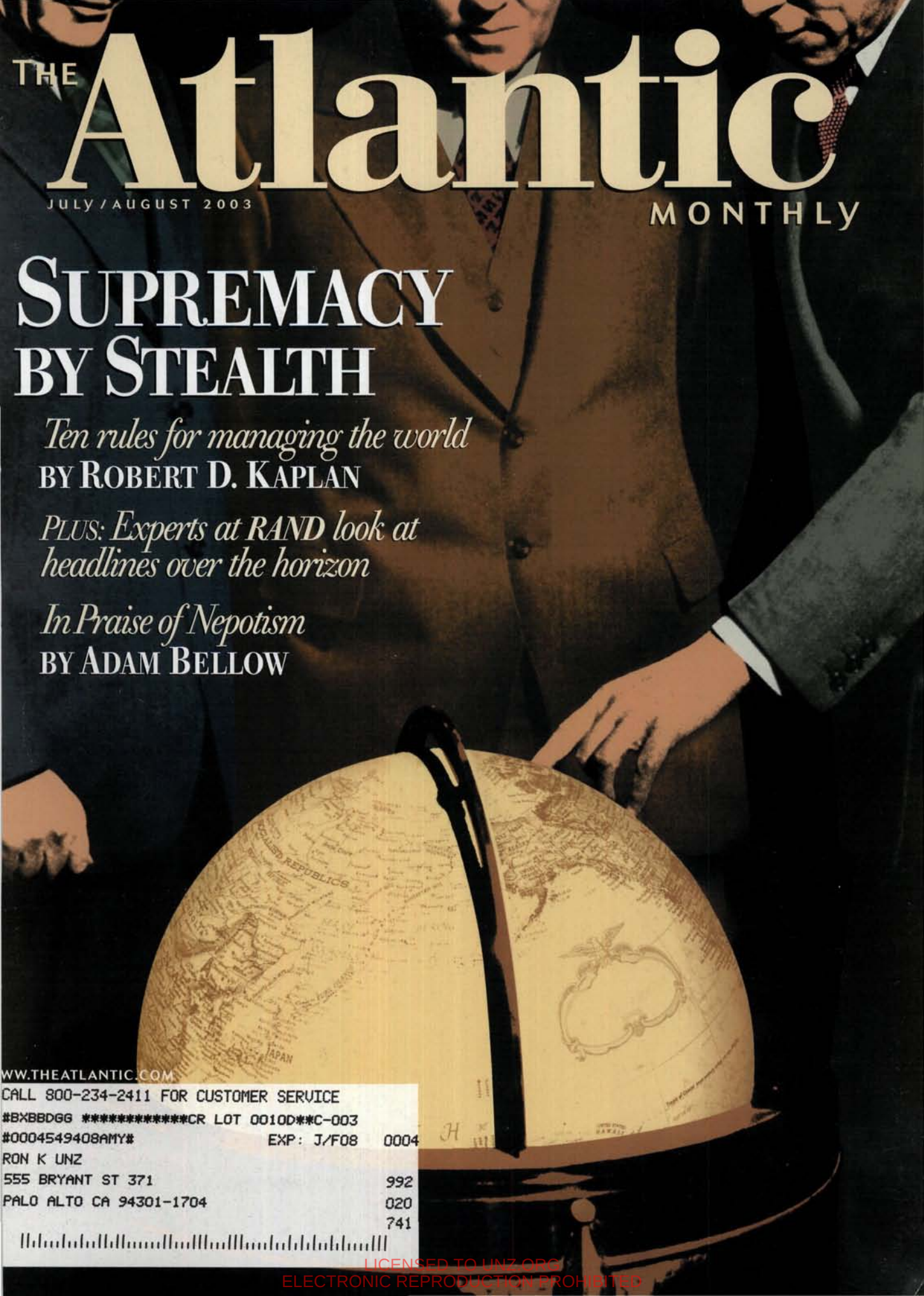




THE

Atlantic

JULY/AUGUST 2003

MONTHLY

SUPREMACY BY STEALTH

Ten rules for managing the world

BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN

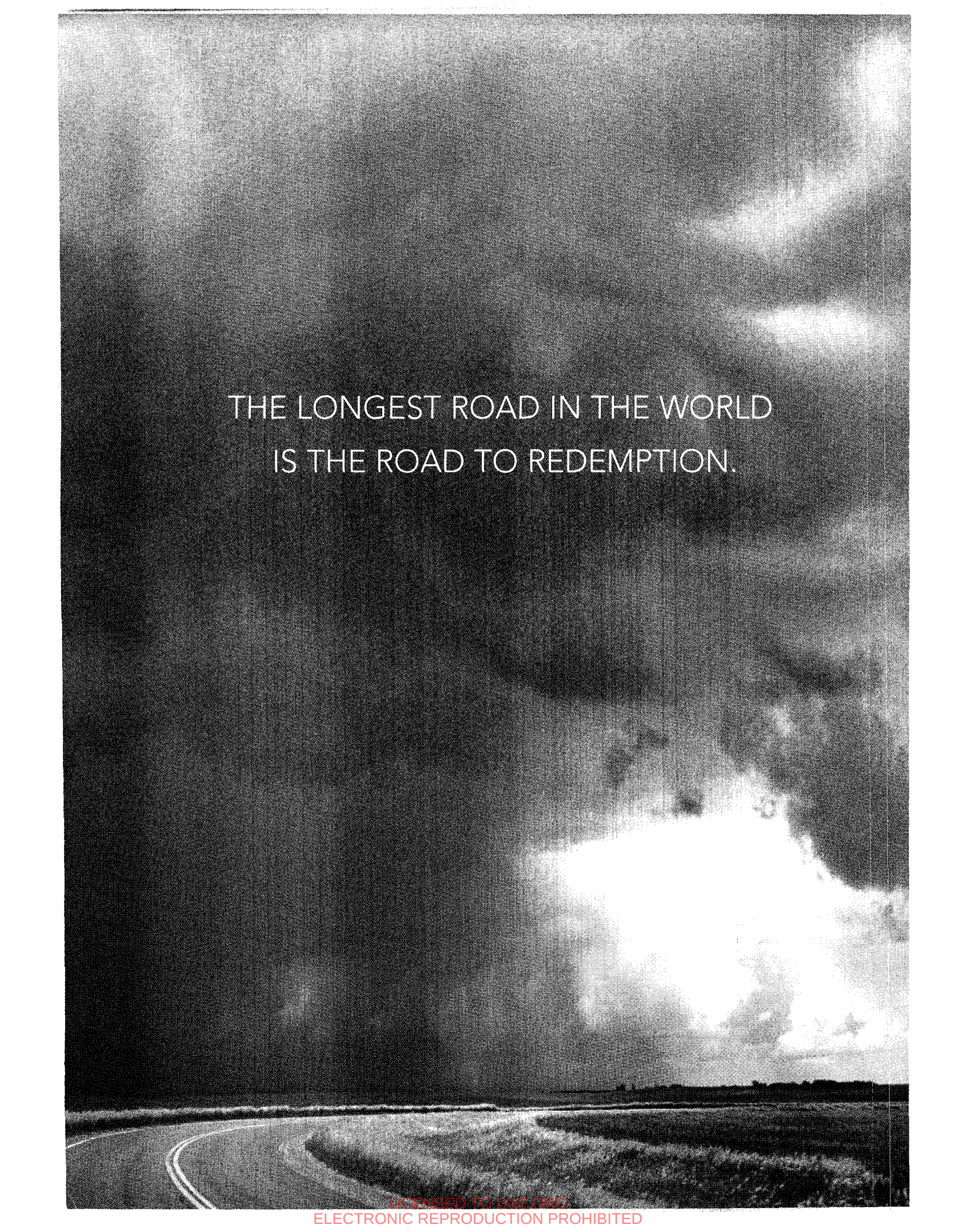
*PLUS: Experts at RAND look at
headlines over the horizon*

In Praise of Nepotism

BY ADAM BELLOW

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A black and white photograph of a winding road leading towards a bright light breaking through dark, heavy clouds. The road curves from the bottom left towards the center of the frame. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, with a large, brilliant light source breaking through on the right side, creating a strong contrast and illuminating the scene. The overall mood is one of hope and journey.

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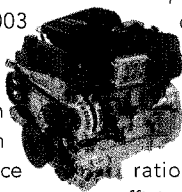
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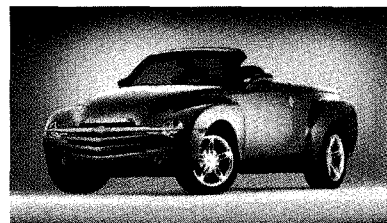
and punch with 4 valves per cylinder, dual overhead cams and variable valve timing – features rarely found in competitive V8s. And with a 10:1 compression ratio, its cylinders fire with the efficiency of a racecar.

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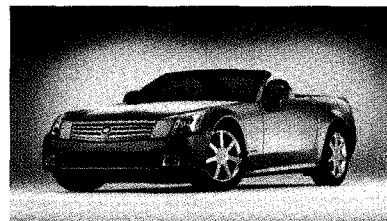
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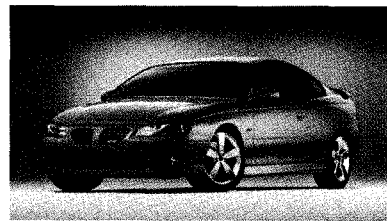
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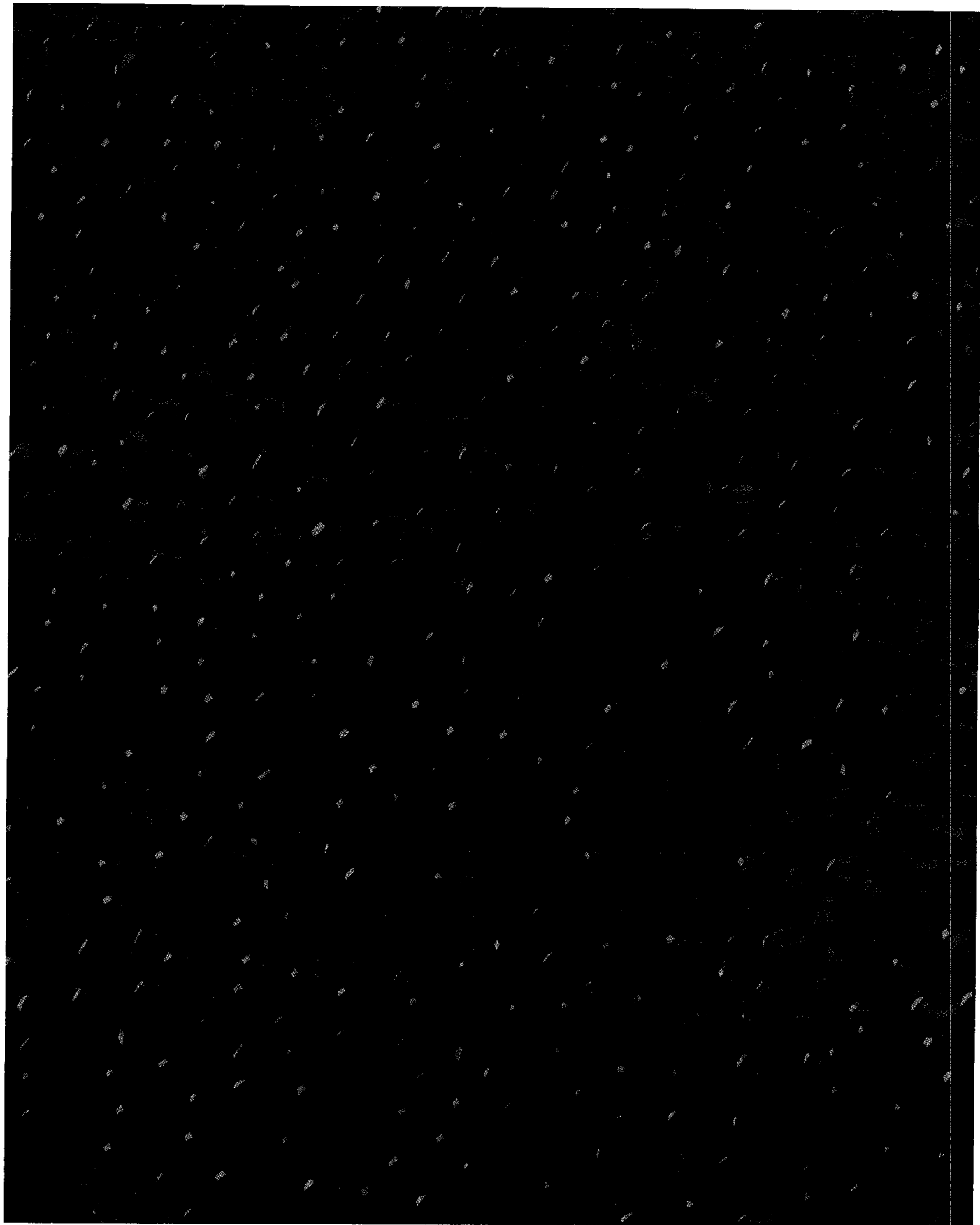
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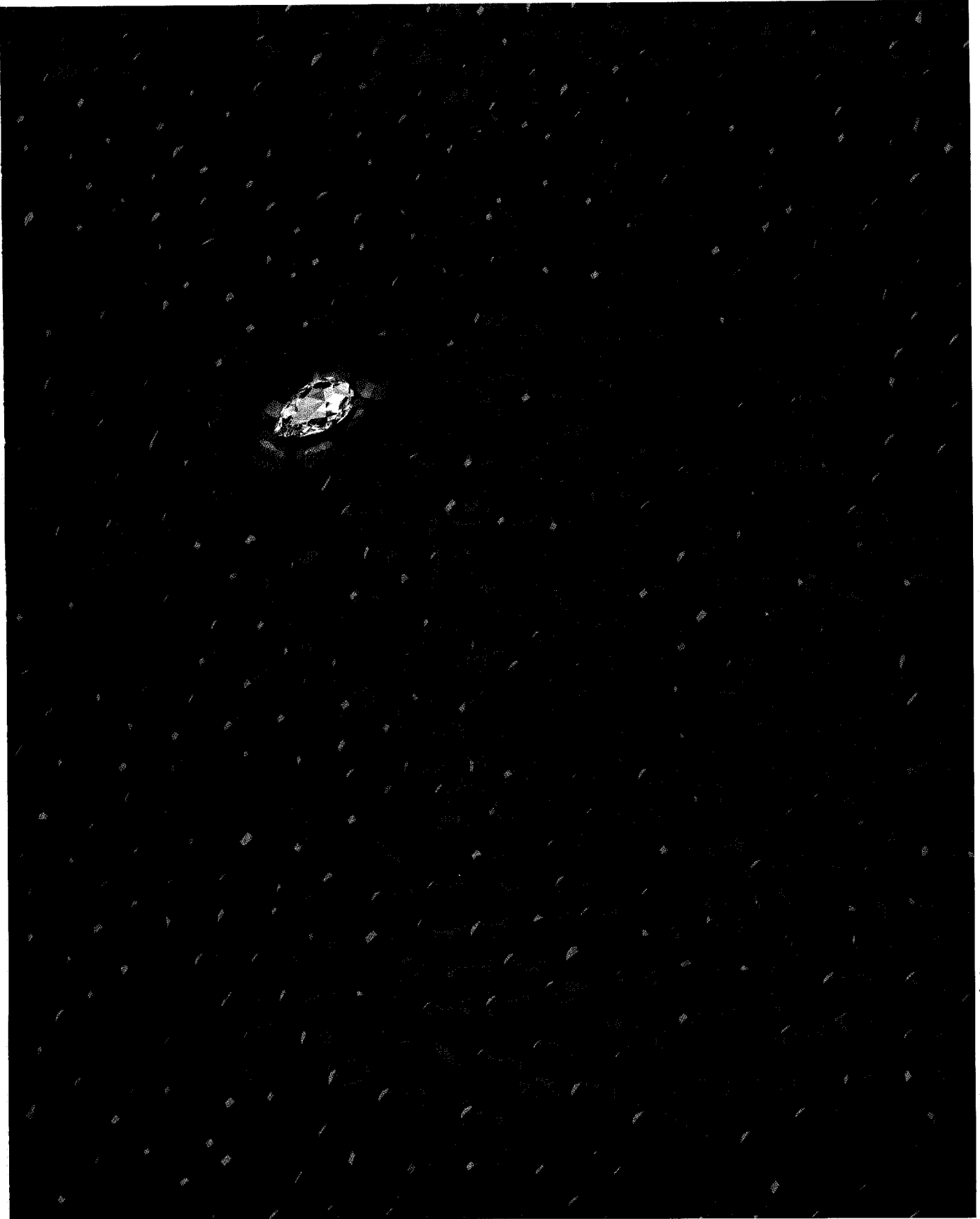


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¹According to R.L. Polk & Co., statistics for Overall Manufacturer Loyalty in 2002 model year, GM ranked highest by having the greatest percentage of households return to purchase or lease another GM vehicle. ²The General Motors Corporation Oshawa #1, Ontario plant was ranked highest and the Lansing, Grand River, MI plant was ranked second highest in North/South America among plants producing vehicles for the U.S. market in J.D. Power and Associates 2003 Initial Quality Study.SM Study based on a total of 52,105 U.S. consumer responses indicating owner reported problems during the first 90 days of ownership. www.jdpower.com. *Limited availability. See dealer for details.

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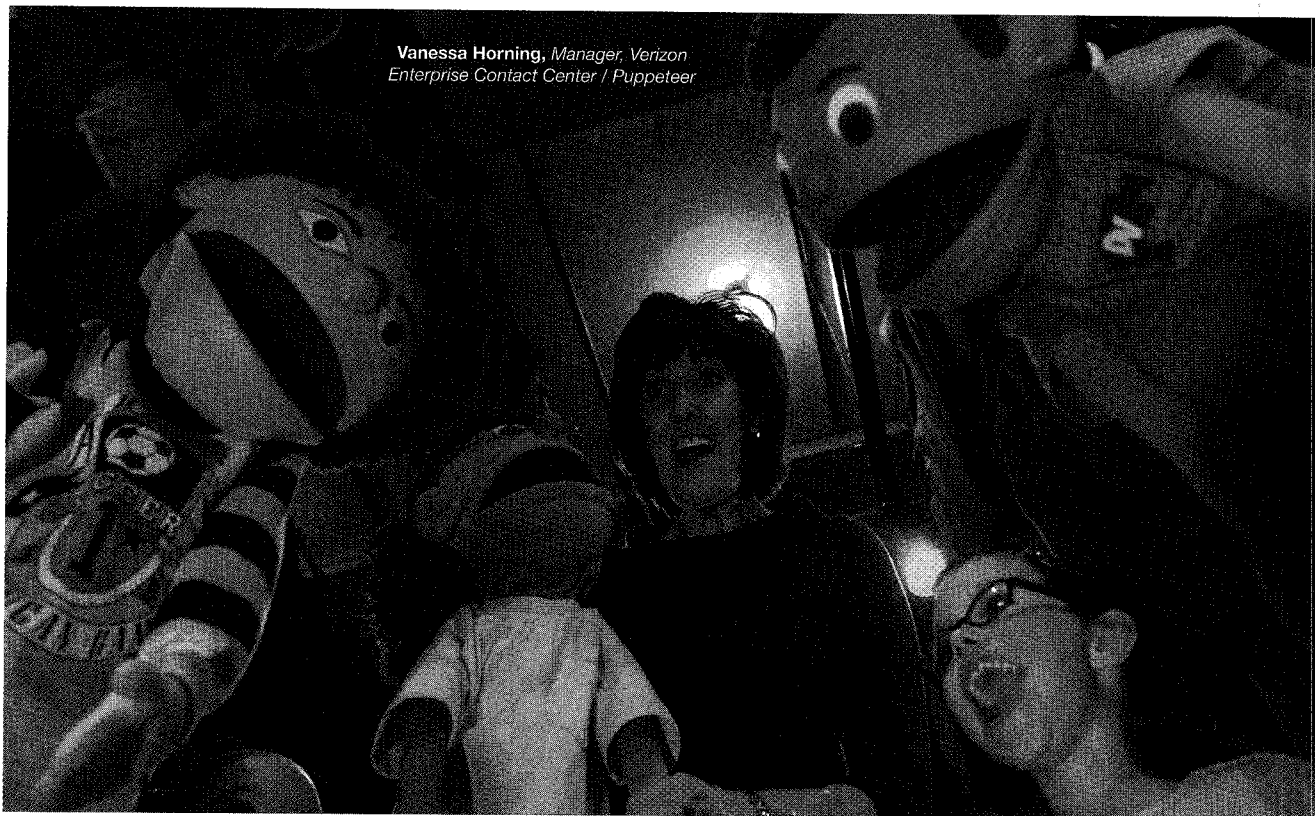


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During his quarter century of dictatorial rule Nicolae Ceaușescu treated the brown bears of Romania almost as badly as he treated the people. Only his gamekeepers saw the grisly reality *by David Quammen*

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Americans censure nepotism on the one hand and practice it as much as they can on the other. There's much to be said for “good” nepotism, the author argues—which is fortunate, because we're living in a nepotistic Golden Age *by Adam Bellow*



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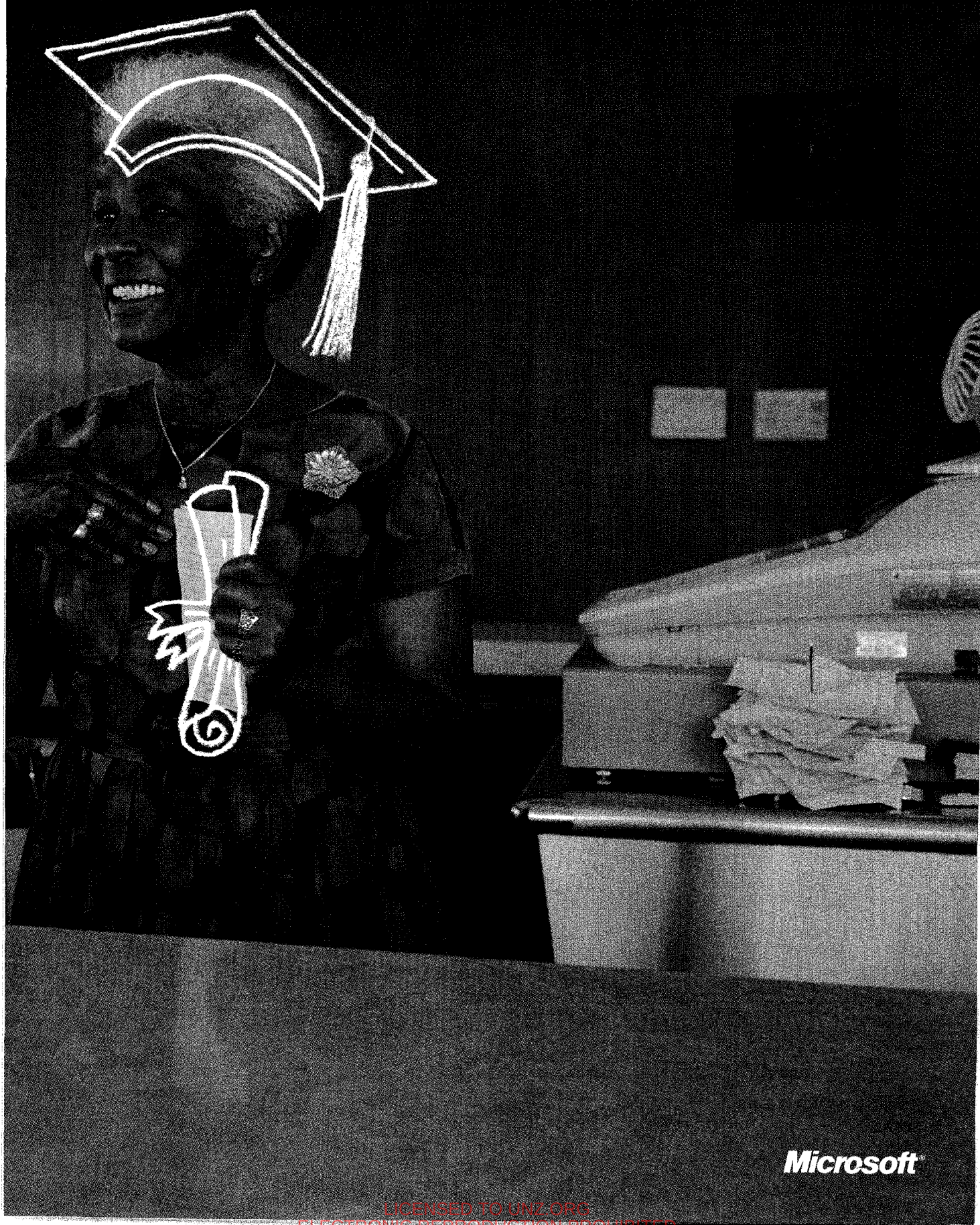
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This month on the Web . . .

Interview: Kaplan discusses this month's cover story, "Supremacy by Stealth."

Robert D. Kaplan

From the Archives: A collection of poems by Lowell that first appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* with articles assessing the poet and his legacy—to accompany Peter Davison's review of *Robert Lowell: Collected Poems*.

Robert Lowell in The Atlantic Monthly

Interview: Heller talks about her new novel, *What Was She Thinking?*, reviewed in this issue by James Marcus.

Zoë Heller

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77 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

Taking up the central portion of this issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* is a special section called “State of the World,” and it offers snapshots of a variety of developments that should get more attention than they actually do.

- Wracked by social malaise and deteriorating public health, Russia is rapidly being depopulated. Its population could well fall from about 145 million today to below 100 million in 2050—an unprecedented decline for a modern country.
- The well-known ravages of HIV/AIDS in Africa are most acute in a pivotal sector of the population—the military. The infection rate among soldiers in Zimbabwe is 50 percent, in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as much as 60 percent. In some South African units the rate is as high as 90 percent.
- Without much fanfare, two countries that seemingly have little in common—predominantly Hindu India and predominantly Muslim Iran—are fashioning an increasingly intimate relationship. The relationship is not just economic; in this volatile part of the world the first stirrings of military cooperation are becoming apparent.
- In the United States military planners must now deal with the consequences of a long-term decline in the number of companies capable of manufacturing sophisticated military hardware, especially aircraft. In the 1950s the Pentagon could rely on almost a dozen aircraft manufacturers; today the number is down to three.

These and other findings come from a diverse group of analysts at the RAND Corporation, whom we asked to identify specific global issues that as yet remain largely off the public’s radar screen—but will soon be on it. RAND has for more than half a century been one of the country’s most prominent research institutions; it addresses a full range of foreign and domestic issues, from military operations to antipoverty campaigns, from biotechnology and airport security to health-care reform and educational practices. Formally incorporated in 1948, and still based in Santa Monica, RAND was a direct result of the partnerships forged during World War II among scientists, social scientists, business leaders, and the military. RAND has some 1,700 staff members today, and its analysts conduct independent and nonpartisan research for a wide array of private and government clients. National security

remains a major focus, and RAND’s vast catalogue of publications includes thousands of documents, their titles ranging from *Confronting Iraq* and *The Advent of Netwar* to *China’s Arms Sales* and *Super Bowl Surveillance: Facing Up to Biometrics*. One of this magazine’s regular contributors, Bruce Hoffman, the author of last month’s cover story, “The Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” is a longtime RAND analyst and the head of the corporation’s Washington office. We’re pleased to have the work of Hoffman and fourteen of his colleagues represented in this issue. Their assessments begin on page 84, under the rubric “Headlines Over the Horizon.”

The decades ahead will almost certainly be unstable and unpredictable ones—a time of extraordinary challenge for American leaders as they tend to our interests abroad.

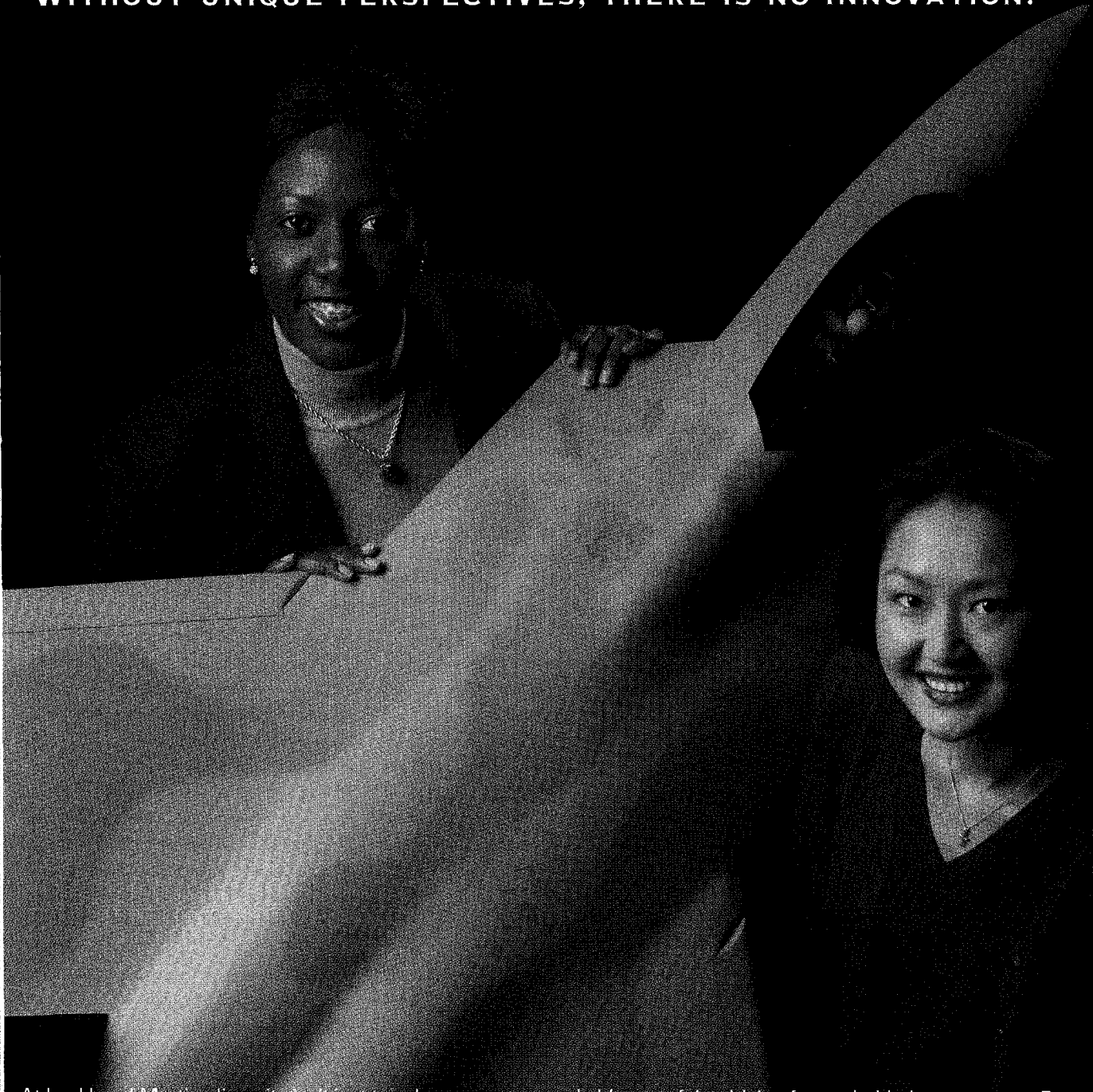
That is the subject of Robert D. Kaplan’s lead essay, “Supremacy by Stealth,” which provides a kind of user’s manual for managing an unruly world. The recent Iraq war, in Kaplan’s view, should not become the model for future behavior; such an enterprise is too huge, too blunt, too expensive, and too risky. America needs a far more delicate touch.

Kaplan’s article in this issue grew out of an ambitious, multi-year undertaking: to travel the far reaches of the planet with the U.S. military and describe how American power makes itself felt around the world. Americans are generally unaware of the full scale of U.S. military activity; as Kaplan points out, even before 9/11 U.S. Special Forces were conducting thousands of operations a year in close to 170 countries. “This will be a ground-level portrait from the remotest and most exotic regions,” Kaplan says about his project, “not a broad overview from the imperial capital.” Some of this reporting has already appeared in *The Atlantic* (for instance, the article on Yemen and Eritrea in the April issue), and more of it will be published on a regular basis over the next two or three years. Our aim is to document a period in which the responsibility for global order falls primarily on the United States—and to explain the perils and the opportunities that the nation confronts as a result. “To be an American in the first decade of the twenty-first century,” Kaplan says, “is to be present at a grand and fleeting moment: a moment that, even if it lasts for several more decades, may be but a flicker in the long march of empires that have calmed broad swaths of the globe.” —THE EDITORS



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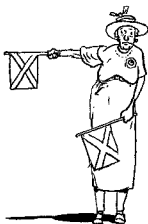


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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Mind of Bush

Richard Brookhiser's article "The Mind of George W. Bush" (April *Atlantic*) was refreshing. Most of the time, in religious circles, the President is either demonized as evil, patronized as stupid, or divinized as a savior. Brookhiser's portrait was of a full human being. I am not sure, however, that the unknown quantity is imagination. I fear that we have evidence of its absence at the very center of the President's faith. Brookhiser writes, "Practically, Bush's faith means that he does not tolerate, or even recognize, ambiguity: there is an all-knowing God who decrees certain behaviors, and leaders must obey. Such beliefs, however much they may alienate him from opinion-makers, are part of his bond with one other leader—the devout Anglican Tony Blair." Spiritual maturity requires a high tolerance for ambiguity, because although God is all-knowing, we aren't. Tony Blair, I hope, is aware of this distinction. The world would be a safer place if leaders could tell the difference between God's will and their own.

*The Very Reverend Alan Jones
Dean of Grace Cathedral
San Francisco, Calif.*

Our Constitution has for more than 200 years provided us with assurance that we have the rights to assemble, to publish, read, and speak freely, and to worship as we choose. That document also erects a wall between Church and State protecting some of us from religion. Accordingly, I am disquieted by the role that religion plays in President George W. Bush's decision-making process as described by Richard Brookhiser. Bush's religious beliefs are, of course, as protected as any other citizen's. However, do we want our most important and powerful decision-maker to render those decisions against the background

of a belief that "there is an all-knowing God who decrees certain behaviors, and leaders must obey"?

*John Stouffer
East Greenwich, R.I.*

The subhead to Richard Brookhiser's detailed analysis "The Mind of George W. Bush" concludes, "The unknown quantity is imagination—the imagination to foresee consequences, the imagination to be a wartime President." If the author had been able to dispel the widely held perception that George W. Bush is an intellectual lightweight, the imagination question would have become moot.

*Jerome C. McMahon
Ormond Beach, Fla.*

Richard Brookhiser's article seems to suggest that George W. Bush has qualities of character and intellect found in Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and Winston Churchill. Harry Truman and the first President Bush are conspicuous by their absence from the list.

During the Civil War, President Lincoln, unlike Bush, demonstrated a certain humility, expressing concern that we be on God's side rather than He on ours. Roosevelt, despite his conviction that the United States should go to war against Hitler, understood the need for public support before taking up arms. Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, realized the strategic importance of fighting the war in concert with our allies, including the Soviet Union and a recalcitrant Charles de Gaulle. Kennedy certainly had sufficient cause to invade Cuba in October of 1962 but chose instead to achieve the removal of the missiles without going to war. Nixon, a man who rose to political prominence as a hard-line anti-communist before he was President, achieved rap-

prochement with both China and the Soviet Union. And whereas Reagan said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall!" he did not say, "Or I will do it for you!"

Harry Truman, the first American President of the Cold War, realized the need to oppose a communist takeover of Korea through the then fledgling United Nations. The present President's father, at the time of Desert Storm, also recognized the importance of working through the UN.

As for Winston Churchill, I think Brookhiser has set the bar much too high for George W. Bush.

*John A. Viteritti
Southold, N.Y.*

What are we to make of Richard Brookhiser's curious article, which offers an exhaustive discussion of decision-making style yet is willing to substitute the notion of a "phantom framework" for a serious examination of the values that underpin decisions? When professed values and actions are as strikingly discordant as they are in the President's case, it is integrity, not imagination, that seems to be lacking. Irony doesn't get much more painful than it is when Bush invokes Jesus Christ as his favorite political philosopher. Many terms come to mind to describe a man who mocks the clemency plea of a death-row inmate, but "Christian" is not one of them.

*Margaret Hornick
Great Barrington, Mass.*

Richard Brookhiser implies that all graduate schools of business follow the case method of instruction. In fact Harvard Business School is unusual in this respect. Most graduate schools of business follow the Wharton School approach, which is to teach fundamentals.

Brookhiser mentions Peter Drucker, who many years ago introduced an ap-

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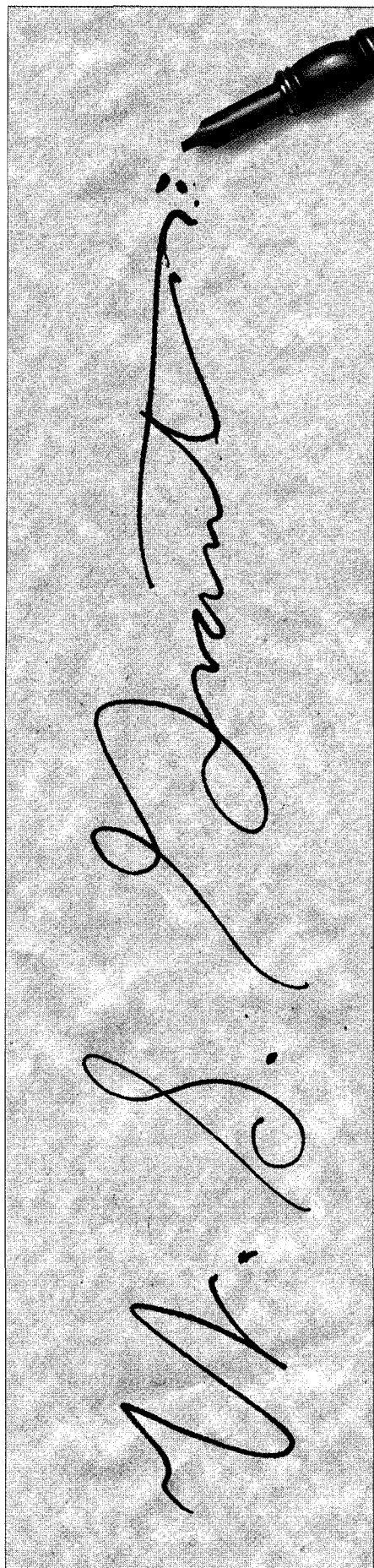
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proach to managing organizations called "Management by Objectives," which is still widely followed under other names. If Bush had followed this method of management, he would not be in the mess he is in today. His analysis would have shown that he needed to support the efforts of other nations to treat global warming instead of angering all of Europe by trashing the Kyoto treaty. He would have supported similar efforts of the leading world powers to deal constructively with other global problems, instead of irritating long-established allies by taking the position that he was always right and they were always wrong. He would have given greater support locally and internationally to activities to combat terrorism, made certain that world opinion supported the need for regime change in Iraq, supported the desires of France, Germany, Russia, and China to share the leadership of the United Nations, made certain that NATO would support his efforts and assist in the postwar recovery of Iraq, produced acceptable evidence that Iraq was an imminent threat to peoples in other nations, held off amassing U.S. military power to engage in a pre-emptive attack, and so on. In fact, especially in Iraq, he made the mistake common to many failed businesses. He did not have a well developed plan that would lead to attainment of his objective.

*R. L. McDonald
Castle Rock, Colo.*

Male Chauvinism

The surprising thing about David Brooks's Agenda essay on male chauvinism ("The Return of the Pig," April *Atlantic*) is his omission of the key factor in the revival of cynical attitudes toward women: the complicity of us women in our own degradation. Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent." How true!

Without female participation (sometimes shockingly enthusiastic) the whole edifice of misogyny would collapse. Some men may read pornography, but we women consume a milder and still insidious version of porn (for example, *Cosmopolitan*) that also essentially degrades and objectifies women. I recently walked out of the film *Chicago* in disgust

after two minutes of watching Catherine Zeta-Jones and Renée Zellweger thrusting their abdomens in a poor and vulgar imitation of 1920s wildness. (Real flappers had much more class.) How many actresses willingly participate in the degradation of women by playing such roles? How many women tacitly support the women-hating images in pop culture by spending money to consume it?

*Nadia Silvershine
Kentfield, Calif.*

David Brooks's piece lamenting the rise of "retro-sexism" in popular culture fails to note a critical distinction between old-fashioned male chauvinism and the new sexual ethos Brooks criticizes. The modern sexual politic, as presented in *Maxim* and its imitators, is mostly devoid of the ideological freight of past eras (in which, not coincidentally, nearly all sexual imagery and references were taboo). Nowhere in *Maxim*—or, indeed, in even the most explicit rap music—is the message either stated or implied that women belong only in the home, should not do "men's work," should limit their contribution to society to raising children, and so forth.

Traditional sexism was a combination of such prescriptive tenets and lascivious sexual talk and imagery. Now we have only the latter, divorced from its previous pernicious sentimentality and blinkered ideology about women. In addition, in a traditionally sexist society access to explicit discussion and presentation of sexual subject matter was permitted only to men. As Brooks points out, sexual imagery, sexual self-presentation, and sexual objectification of the opposite sex are now equally available and socially validated for women, a development that appears to spring more from the younger generation's experience with the real—as opposed to the academically idealized—dynamics of day-to-day "coed" activities in business, education, and other spheres previously segregated by sex.

*Kenneth Clair
Arlington, Va.*

David Brooks lumps together as "blatant sexism" the demeaning of women by gangsta rappers and the appreciation of women's bodies. My dic-

tionary defines sexism as “discriminatory or abusive behavior towards members of the opposite sex.” Surely visual appreciation to the point of lust is not, in and of itself, sexism. The cited example of Lara Croft is particularly interesting. Here is a woman in a nontraditional job, kicking butt action-hero style, and yet men are supposed to feel guilty for enjoying her looks? Is James Bond similarly a product of sexism? I don’t mind confronting a rapper on misogynistic attitudes; but it seems to me a loser’s game to try to convince straight men that they should be ashamed of their very heterosexuality.

Paul Prescod
Vancouver, B.C.

House of Saud

Very early in his attack on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (“The Fall of the House of Saud,” May *Atlantic*), Robert Baer mentions “a recent report commissioned by the UN Security Council [indicating] that Saudi Arabia has transferred \$500 million to al Qaeda over the past decade.” This report was never commissioned by the UN Security Council; it was presented to the council by an unaffiliated source and neither confirmed nor taken seriously. The writer is a consultant to the plaintiffs’ lawyers in the 9/11 lawsuit and obviously has an interest in promoting a specific picture of Saudi Arabia.

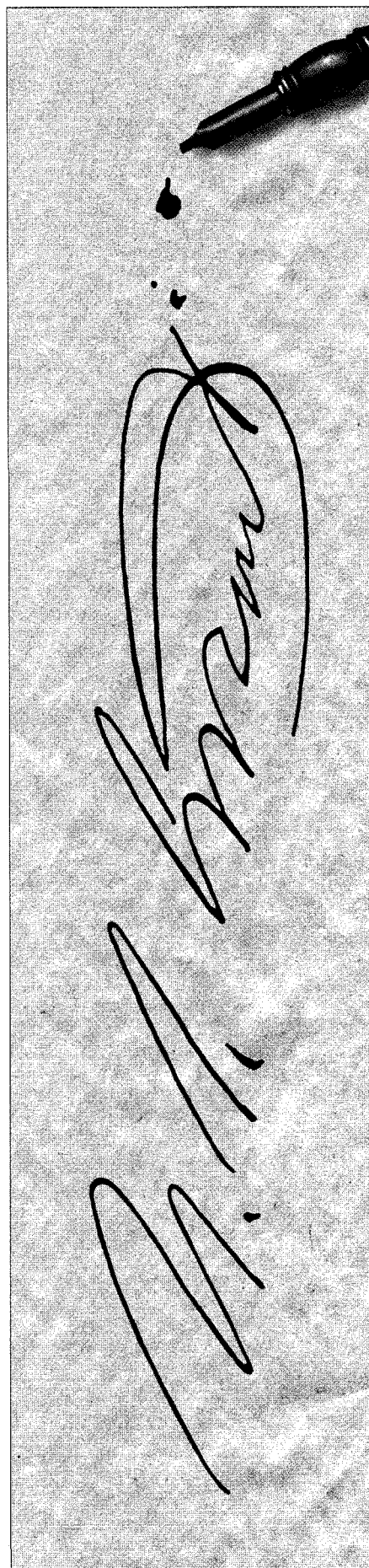
Baer’s portrait of the Saudi economy is not in line with reality. What the author describes is a stagnant, inefficient, corrupt economic system. The reality is vastly different: Saudi Arabia is the nineteenth largest exporter and the twentieth largest importer in the world. More than 280 Saudi-U.S. joint ventures exist. Since April of 2000 the Saudi Arabia General Investment Authority has approved 1,203 licenses for projects worth about \$11.65 billion. Negotiations with international oil companies for investments totaling more than \$26 billion in the kingdom’s energy sector are close to being completed. Privatization and economic-diversification efforts have been given priority since the establishment of the Supreme Economic Council. Saudi Arabia’s stock market has grown rapidly over the past ten years and, with a capitalization of more than \$80 billion, is now the

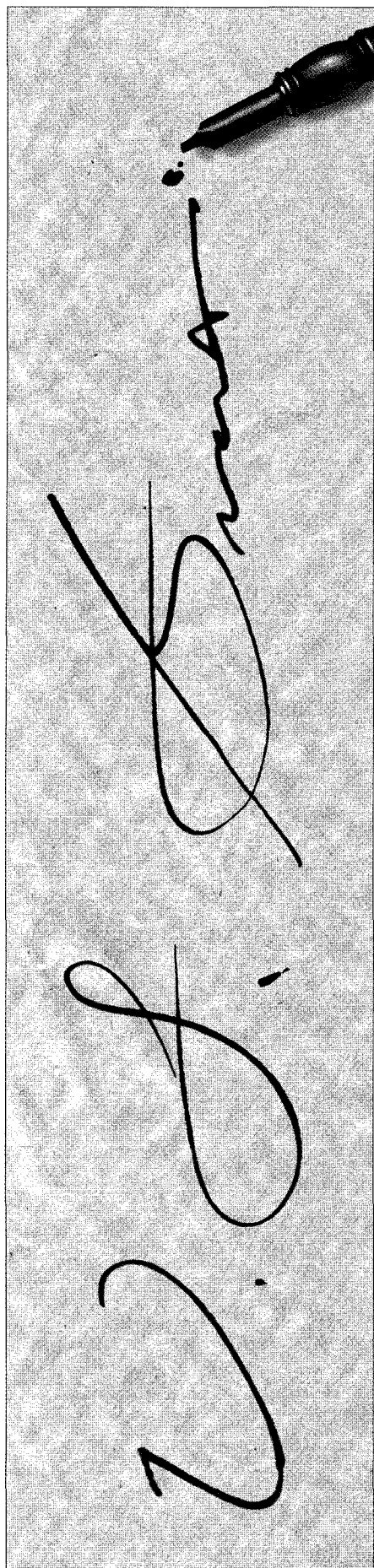
largest in the Arab world. This figure is expected to multiply as more companies are privatized. The non-oil portion of Saudi Arabia’s GDP has increased from about 30 percent in the mid-1970s to more than 60 percent today. The number of operating factories has risen from 199 in 1970 to more than 3,300 today, with a total investment of \$90 billion. Saudi businesses export products to more than eighty countries. This is not the picture of a stagnant and inefficient economy.

Baer calls the rule of law in Saudi Arabia “a sham.” Would several thousand foreign companies engage in business or invest in the kingdom if this were the case? Would the country have one of the lowest crime rates in the world if its laws were a sham?

Baer claims that “popular preachers all over Saudi Arabia call openly for a *jihād* against the West.” This goes against the grain of the consistent and public positions taken by the most senior religious scholars. The Council of Senior Ulama, the highest religious body in the kingdom, several months ago issued an opinion stating that “the acts of shedding the blood of innocent people, the bombing of buildings and ships, and the destruction of public and private installations are criminal acts and against Islam.” In the same opinion the council stated that incitement and the labeling of people as “infidels” contravene the teachings of Islam and that “Islamic Law clearly prohibits leveling such charges against non-Muslims, and warns against following those who carry such deviant beliefs.”

Robert Baer misrepresents Saudi Arabia’s efforts in the war on terrorism. He contends that “as of this writing there hasn’t been a single Saudi arrest related to 9/11—not even of a material witness.” In fact Saudi Arabia has questioned more than 2,000 people and made more than 300 arrests, and last month it referred ninety suspects to the courts to stand trial. Many of the arrests of major al Qaeda operatives around the world were made with Saudi assistance. Just this past February, CIA Director George Tenet stated, “The Saudis are providing increasingly important support to our counterterrorism efforts—from arrests to sharing debriefing results.” Senior American officials, including the President, have





publicly and consistently praised the kingdom's positive contributions to the war against terrorism.

Saudi Arabia has proven over the past six decades to be one of America's most reliable and steadfast friends. It has made important contributions to peace, stability, and security, not only in the Middle East but on a global level. A serious, thoughtful, and informed discussion of this important ally is needed.

Nail Al-Jubeir

Director of Information

Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia

Washington, D.C.

The Fall of the House of Saud" contained much good information but one glaring error. Robert Baer claims that the growth of trade from "\$56.2 million in 1950 to \$19.3 billion in 2000" represents an "average annual growth rate of nearly 70 percent." The author lost more than a couple of decimal points somewhere; at that growth rate for fifty years a nickel would increase in value to more than \$16 billion. The correct growth rate for the trade figures Baer cites should be approximately 12 percent.

John Tietjen

Corvallis, Ore.

Robert Baer states that the Carlyle Group "has been conducting immensely profitable business with Saudi Arabia." This is false. As a leveraged-buyout firm, Carlyle makes the lion's share of its profits from the sale of companies and a much smaller amount from investment-management fees. Carlyle has no investments in Saudi Arabia and only a handful of investors from that country. Baer did not receive this information from Carlyle.

Christopher W. Ullman

The Carlyle Group

Washington, D.C.

Robert Baer replies:

The report alleging that Saudi Arabia transferred \$500 million to Osama bin Laden was written at the request of the Colombian ambassador to the UN, who at the time was the president of the UN Security Council. The report's author has also been a consultant to French intelligence on bin Laden. This of course does not mean that the author's

figures are necessarily precise or complete. Nonetheless, I and other commentators on bin Laden have used the author's calculations as an approximate reference, because they accord with the best estimates. But more to the point, anyone interested in tracking Saudi funding to bin Laden is forced to rely on reports like this because Saudi Arabia has declined to offer better ones. Saudi Arabia has never provided a credible accounting for money that has passed through its charities or international government-aid programs.

Very recently I made my own quick calculation of Saudi money going to bin Laden and his supporters. I arrived at a figure a lot higher than \$500 million—by adding the hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of free oil that Saudi Arabia covertly sent to the Taliban in the 1990s. The oil propped up the Taliban, which in turn hosted bin Laden. Without the support of the Taliban, and presumably of Saudi subsidies, bin Laden would not have had a base from which to prepare for the September 11 attacks. Earlier in the nineties, when bin Laden was hosted by Sudan, similar amounts of money went to that country, largely through Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Directorate and royal-family-backed charities.

Saudi Arabia may try to dismiss this aid as too indirect to matter, but what absolutely cannot be dismissed is the charity money, overseen by the royal family, that we know ended up in bin Laden's war chest. The most notorious case involved the International Islamic Relief Organization, which funded bin Laden's cell in the Philippines. The head of the cell went on to carry out the 9/11 attacks. Another instance occurred in the mid-1990s, when the Muslim World League sent tens of millions of dollars to a Central Asian conduit, which passed the money to bin Laden to buy weapons. The IIRO and the Muslim World League are nominally under the supervision of Prince Salman, a senior Saudi-government official. He has never been held accountable. And until Salman talks, or Saudi Arabia provides a credible explanation for these and numerous other questionable transfers to bin Laden, I will have to stick with the approximate figure of \$500 million.

Likewise, although Saudi Arabia may have arrested hundreds of bin Laden associates, it has offered no proof that it has arrested a single member of the bin Laden cell involved in 9/11—and Saudi citizens seem certain to have been involved. A Saudi

who was arrested in Pakistan crossed the border into Dubai to deposit money in an account used by the hijackers. Did he act alone or with the help of other Saudis? Two Saudi citizens hosted two of the hijackers in California. They left the country before the attacks, and their whereabouts are unknown. Finally, who recruited the fifteen Saudis who died in the 9/11 attack? I truly doubt that they just woke up one morning, on a whim decided to commit mass murder, and answered a bin Laden ad on the Internet. I believe that someone in Saudi Arabia encouraged them to come to their decision. If we consider what we know about Germany's and Pakistan's assistance in the 9/11 investigation, Saudi Arabia can only be described as uncooperative.

According to U.S. government figures, 90 percent of Saudi Arabia's export earnings are from petroleum and petroleum products. Only 35 percent of its GDP comes from the private sector. And with high-double-digit unemployment, Saudi Arabia will be viewed as a one-commodity republic for some time to come.

Regarding Saudi Arabia's judicial system, execution for sorcery (consider the Naqshabandi case) suggests a sham to me.

Numerous Saudi clerics have called for a jihad, and Saad al Burayk, who accompanied Crown Prince Abdullah to visit President Bush in Texas last year, called for the enslavement of Jewish women. This does not reflect the tolerant Islam I know.

John Tietjen is correct. I definitely moved that decimal too far to the right. I calculate the annual growth rate at seven percent, not 12 percent (and certainly not 70 percent), but I've always been better at languages than at math. My apologies.

The Carlyle Group has its hand in many pies, but it has had a long and highly profitable relationship with the House of Saud. For instance, in one of its first big successes, back in 1991, Carlyle paved the way for Saudi Prince Al Walid bin Talal to buy nearly \$600 million worth of Citicorp stock. For much of the nineties the defense contractor BDM International, in which Carlyle then had a controlling interest, received \$50 million annually to provide training and operational and logistical services for the Saudi Arabian National Guard, the Saud family's bodyguards. (Carlyle sold its stake in BDM to TRW in late 1997.) Until the end of 2001 Carlyle also served as an adviser to the royal family on its Economic Offset

Program, which purports to encourage foreign investment in the kingdom.

In addition to buying small defense contractors and selling them at a profit, Carlyle spent about \$180 million of its own money to acquire United Defense in a 1997 leveraged buyout. Four years later, in late 2001, Carlyle sold slightly more than half the stock in United Defense to the public. In May of 2002 The Washington Post estimated that Carlyle had gotten a roughly five-for-one payoff on its United Defense investment. Along with Egypt and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia virtually makes the market for U.S. fighter planes, missiles, tanks, armored vehicles, and other weaponry and support services. The kingdom was also the sole foreign market for the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, which was for many years the mainstay of United Defense's product line.

We can quibble over what constitutes "immensely profitable business" for a high-powered leveraged-buyout firm with a sideline in investment management, but the public record leaves little doubt that the Carlyle Group has pursued and nurtured close ties with the Saudi ruling family and other superwealthy Saudis, and has been handsomely rewarded for its efforts.

What Whitman Knew

In response to David Brooks's excellent essay "What Whitman Knew" (May *Atlantic*), I must say I had to laugh aloud when I got to his lines "It's hard these days to put that much faith in poets and writers. The geniuses Whitman envisioned have not arrived." The counterargument is Whitman himself, along with contemporaries such as Dickinson, Hawthorne, and Melville. Then we have the plethora of twentieth-century greats, among whom Faulkner (whose Nobel Prize acceptance speech alone would qualify him), Steinbeck, and Frost surely stand up to writers of any time and place. I think Brooks may need to revisit American literature.

Karen Maceira
Slidell, La.

"What Whitman Knew" locates the inspiration for our current foreign policy in Whitman's idealization of democracy. However, David Brooks fails to mention the darker side of that vision. To Whitman, and to President Bush,



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(Ulysses S. Grant's real signature is on page 17.)

American democracy is an absolute measure of civilization. It should govern as well as inspire the future. We are justified, therefore, in using our military along with our economic power to carry this society of societies to the farthest corners of the world. It is no wonder that Europeans are not enthusiastic about this dream of limitless power.

There is another Whitmanesque quality to our international relations that our friends as well as our enemies find objectionable. Although Whitman celebrated the people en masse, he thought that he was complete in himself. Such imagined self-perfection is at the root of our unilateralism. It leads us to be contemptuous of the cooperation that nations with more-tragic histories have come to realize is indispensable to global order.

Cornelius F. Murphy Jr.
Pittsburgh, Pa.

It was good to find David Brooks paying respect to Whitman's prophetic "Democratic Vistas"—a "nuanced" work, Brooks writes, that veers between extremes of prophetic optimism and dread that the American democratic experiment may fail. True enough. What does not come through in Brooks's equally nuanced piece, however, is the extent to which Whitman, having witnessed the divisions and horrors of the Civil War, saw a far more serious crisis confronting the Republic in the growing division between America's haves and have-nots, between America as a democratic hope for the masses and America as a corrupt marketplace run by the unscrupulous and the privileged.

The depravity of the business classes in our country is not less than has been supposed but infinitely greater ... In business (this all devouring modern word business), the one sole object is, by any means, pecuniary gain. The magician's serpent ate up all the other serpents; and money making is our magician's serpent, remaining today sole master of the field. The best class we show is but a mob of fashionably dressed speculators and vulgarians.

The most powerful prophecy typically takes its strength from its deadly accuracy rather than from nuance.

Richard Cook
St. Louis, Mo.

Let It Be

Jonathan Rauch is most certainly wrong to assert, "Religion ... remains the most divisive and volatile of social forces" ("Let It Be," May *Atlantic*). Although this belief gets a fair amount of airtime, it simply will not stand up to scrutiny. The most evil, murderous characters on the stage of history have done their deeds in the name of politics, power, and philosophy—not religion. Hitler, who gassed more than six million of Rauch's (and my) kinsmen, did not claim religion as his motivation. Nor did Stalin or Mao for their slaughtering. In fact their inspiration, Karl Marx, could be identified much the same way Rauch defines himself—as an "unrepentant atheistic Jew."

For all it may have to claim for itself, apatheism at its root is no more than indifference. Our world needs and deserves a better solution than the one Rauch proposes.

Randy Newman
Annandale, Va.

Notwithstanding Jonathan Rauch's presumptuous assertion that he, along with his fellow "apatheists," is standing at the pinnacle of cultural evolution looking down at the rest of us poor folk still caught up in some backward form of religious zeal, quite a strong case could be made that indifference toward religion, even under a new name, is neither new nor innocent. For example, the areas of pre-war Germany in which religious practice was at its lowest correspond almost precisely to the areas in which National Socialism gained its greatest support. Many other examples of collusive indifference could almost certainly be found throughout history.

Furthermore, it is difficult to see why apathy toward religion should be considered an independent form of apathy. Voter turnout is in decline. Voluntary service organizations don't seem to be popular with young people. My experience as a teacher indicates that apathy toward religion most often reflects an indifference to ideas and social reality generally, and in this sense I agree with Rauch that it seems to be growing, although I can't say I feel any enthusiasm about it. It is not uncommon now in class discussions

to hear two diametrically opposed opinions expressed back to back without anyone's feeling the necessity to pursue the controversy. This is not reassuring.

Finally, religious fervor, perhaps a less prejudicial word than "zeal," has not had as thoroughly black a record as Rauch would have us believe. In fact, strong arguments could be made in favor of spiritual fervor as a necessary and sadly absent ingredient in improving the state of the world. Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., the Dalai Lama, and Desmond Tutu are only the most recent and the most public among a multitude of people with strong religious convictions who have unquestionably made the world a better place to live.

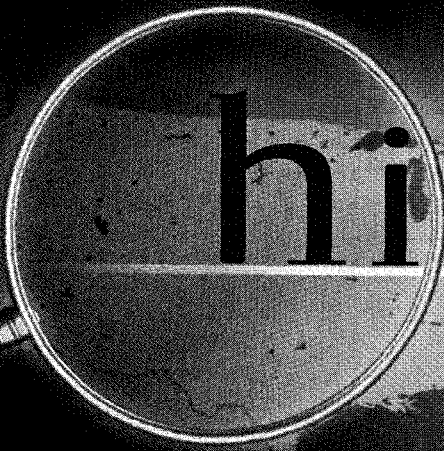
It is true, of course, that practitioners of various religions have promulgated narrow-mindedness, hatred, and violence far too often. Their crimes have been identified and catalogued, and feed the now commonly held belief that humanity will be safe only when the last religious beliefs have died out. On the other hand, as Rauch points out, militant atheism is no less hot-blooded. This is why indifference has a definite appeal. It may be, however, that the victims of indifference are simply more difficult to identify and quantify. Although the self-destructive behavior characteristic of many Western societies involves no clearly identifiable perpetrator, future social scientists may one day examine our world with different eyes and make causal connections that we might find surprising, not to say incriminating. Ultimately, they are the ones who will be in a position to decide whether Rauch and like-minded apatheists were indeed at the cultural forefront of our time.

Robin Dick
Montreal, Quebec

Understanding Islam

Christopher Hitchens's review of *C*works about Islam in the April *Atlantic* ("Holy Writ") is introduced with the words "Recent writers on Islam need to be more stringent in their criticism." I submit that some of Hitchens's analysis needs to be more stringent. He makes the fuzzy assertion that "[Islam] confirms and reasserts the tenets of Moses and

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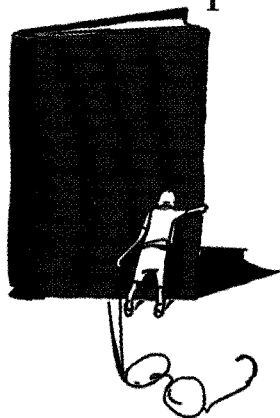
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Jesus and the Virgin Mary." What is that supposed to mean? Tenets assert that something is true or that something has happened. Is the tenet of Moses about his existence or is it something he taught? Can that question even be asked about the Virgin Mary? Does "tenet" have any consistent meaning, even an implied meaning, for Hitchens?

He reveals more serious confusion by saying that Islam "confirms and reasserts" these elements of the Judeo-Christian tradition. I have been reading Muslim authors on such matters and listening to Muslim speakers in my region, even the regional imam. Without exception they have failed to show understanding of either Jewish or Christian sources and traditions. They may use the names of prophets and the name of Jesus, but in no way do they confirm or reassert what Jews or Christians mean by them.

Hitchens is clear enough in describing his secularist position. He needs to be clearer in describing positions he rejects.

*LeRoy Martinson
Valparaiso, Ind.*

Christopher Hitchens demonstrates some of the problems encountered by non-Muslims in understanding Islam.

I should like to offer the following hypothesis: Westerners hate Islam because it reminds them of the primitive doctrines and practices of their own Judaism and Christianity. Islam has, much better than Judaism or Christianity, preserved the original Abrahamic religion in all its splendor as well as its squalor. It is not permissible for Christians and Jews to express openly the disdain they often have for their own religious tradition, which has in many ways oppressed and controlled them for centuries—a religious tradition that flouts common sense and many natural human instincts. Instead of assaulting this tradition directly, in the manner of Friedrich Nietzsche, they have chosen, probably unconsciously, to use Islam as a surrogate target. The hatred for Islam is hatred of the Judeo-Christian biblical tradition from which many are striving to escape into freedom.

*Norman Ravitch
Savannah, Ga.*

Christopher Hitchens is mistaken when he writes, "Finally, of the three monotheistic systems of spiritual obedience, Islam contains in its mandates and injunctions the most frequent references—indeed, exhortations—to proselytization." Insofar as "monotheistic systems of spiritual obedience" refers to religious traditions that confess adherence to one ultimate or supreme God, at least two independent traditions in the religion commonly referred to in the West by the all-embracing name of Hinduism are "monotheistic": the Vaisnava tradition, which confesses adherence to the one supreme god Narayana, and the Saiva tradition, whose members believe that Siva is the only true God.

In the interests of the multiculturalism he professes to support, might it not be appropriate for Hitchens to stop acting as if Judaism, Christianity, and Islam had a monopoly on the concept of monotheism? Do only the Abrahamic faiths count as "systems of spiritual obedience" in *his* multicultural world?

*Anant Kishore
Chicago, Ill.*

Wifely Duty

Caitlin Flanagan makes many interesting points in her funny and thought-provoking essay on "the wifely duty" (January/February *Atlantic*) as portrayed in several new books, among them a collection of original personal essays I edited (*The Bitch in the House: 26 Women Tell the Truth about Sex, Solitude, Work, Motherhood, and Marriage*). But I take issue with her assertion that "what makes [these essays] so satisfying to women is that they are utterly humiliating to husbands." And her statement that for the writer Jill Bialosky "Clearly, sticking it to [her husband] was part of her intention when she wrote and published the piece" is utterly absurd.

It's a huge and, frankly, baffling leap for Flanagan—a writer herself—to assume that because Bialosky told the truth about her marriage without using a pseudonym, she wrote the piece as an act of aggression against her husband. (In fact, only after her husband had

read the essay and agreed that she should publish it under her real name did Bialosky do so.) What's more, much of what makes Bialosky's essay both striking and stunning is that she does reveal, with clarity and candor, the sexual facts of her marriage (and, as Flanagan's piece reminds us, of countless other contemporary marriages), even at the risk of exposing herself or her husband to judgment.

Perhaps Flanagan doth project too much when she concludes that all our husbands (I include my own, who, as he puts it, "took a slight drubbing" in my introduction) are "humiliated" by these essays. Let's face it, these are men (many of them writers themselves) who fell in love with feisty, opinionated, writing women—men who, unlike Flanagan, seem to have realized that whereas a bad or mediocre writer may well have as her most important goal to protect those she loves, a good writer's first goal is to write a good piece.

Cathi Hanauer
Northampton, Mass.

Many marriages may be like the ones described by Caitlin Flanagan, where the resentful wife deliberately withholds sex. But I bet that in at least as many basically happy marriages sex just isn't as important to either partner as all the other glue that makes the relationship successful, including quiet time together and the enjoyment of children.

Flanagan says, "The reason abortion rights hold such a sanctified position in American political life is that they are a critical component of the yuppie program for maximum personal sexual pleasure." This statement is offensive. Many proponents of choice want abortion to be legal because they wish to avoid a return to botched, septic, back-alley abortions, which were performed on many distinctly non-yuppie girls and women prior to 1973.

Valerie Norton
La Jolla, Calif.

Caitlin Flanagan's otherwise brilliant discussion of contemporary "sexless" marriages omits two important

pieces of survey data, confirmed repeatedly over the past decade: married couples report more sexual satisfaction than sexually active singles, and higher-income married people report more satisfaction than those in lower income brackets. Either the numbers are way off or Flanagan has wildly exaggerated the degree of "sexlessness" in yuppie unions.

I'll put my money on the numbers. We double-income professionals may not be hotties anymore, but we're not stone-cold either.

Jonathan Zimmerman
Narberth, Pa.

Caitlin Flanagan's *wonderful* contemplation of the current state of the American marriage bed is lucid, balanced, funny, and compassionate—a welcome voice of reason in the confusing and often hostile arena of contemporary gender relations. I suspect it will even be life-changing for those men and women who take its observations to heart.

Bill LaHay
Des Moines, Iowa

July 18, 2006

Zoomi Danlami, 4, died of being born in the wrong place. Because of poverty, malnutrition and poor medical conditions, Zoomi didn't have a chance. She is survived by her mother, who was powerless to help her, and by all of us who could have helped prevent her demise.

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Perils of Partition

Christopher Hitchens ("The Perils of Partition," March *Atlantic*) ranges freely across continents and centuries in his critique of British "divide and rule" tactics as they relate to ongoing regional conflicts. However, Hitchens's analysis of the partition of India is woefully inadequate. Certainly, the case can be made—as Hitchens, borrowing from Auden, makes it—that the British made a hash of the actual line-drawing. What Hitchens neglects to mention, however, is that the impetus for partition came from the Indian side. Muslim separatism began not with Mohammed Ali Jinnah in the 1920s but with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in the 1860s. Moreover, as the British responded to Indian demands for devolution of power with the first hesitant steps toward democracy and home rule, a policy of reservations based on religious affiliation was already set in place, largely at the insistence of Indian Muslims. Thus India's decades-long quest for independence was marked at every stage by some degree of tension between faith communities over which the British had little control. And although it is true that the Muslim League never represented the hearts and minds of a majority of the Subcontinent's Muslims, much the same can be said of the Indian National Congress and the majority Hindu community. Such has been the conclusion, at any rate, of postmodern and subaltern historians over the past decade, who have deconstructed the Indian national movement into so many fragments that one wonders how it achieved such a stunning victory in the first place.

The tragedy of Indian partition is not to be minimized, but neither can it be cynically ascribed to a failed British stratagem for holding onto power at any cost. If anything, it represented a last-ditch effort to prevent civil war. And though it failed miserably, one might argue that by at least fixing the borders of the new countries, partition forestalled still greater bloodshed. At any rate, the suggestion that it may have been possible to prevent all strife had only the lines been drawn differently on the map is an absurdity.

Kelli Kobor
Arlington, Va.

Christopher Hitchens's liberal roots are showing in "The Perils of Partition." His vivid examples only illustrate the basic socialist-liberal stance: everything that Western civilization has ever done is wrong. Of course, Hitchens does not offer any alternatives. Gertrude Bell's "tracing the new boundary of Iraq ... with her walking stick" is an entertaining image. What would Hitchens have done after World War I? Left the Ottoman Empire in charge? Would the Ottoman Turks have been concerned about "social justice"?

Do we really need more liberal, smarty-pants Western-civilization bashing? People were fighting over borders long before the British Empire spoiled the world.

Thomas Dunham
Nevada City, Calif.

The Secularist Habit

In "Kicking the Secularist Habit" (March *Atlantic*), David Brooks describes his conversion from arrogant secularism to a humbler point of view. But his transformation is pretty limited and his characterization of secularism well wide of the mark. Like Hume before him, it seems, Brooks had imagined religion as a spent force; worse, he identifies secularism with that fantasy. But he was wrong on both counts, and apparently remains wrong on the second.

Brooks's revelation of the ongoing power of religion extends only to the first degree of religious involvement: religious beliefs. But his six-step program goes no further than this. For example, in step four he suggests that the State Department and the CIA should be looking for nonsecular explanations of events in the world. But he doesn't suggest (as perhaps President Bush would) that they should adopt a religious point of view of their own; only that they should acknowledge the importance of (and the difficulty of quantifying or predicting) "religious ideas, impulses, and actions." This is perfectly compatible with a fully secular view of the world. All it claims is something that should have been obvious all along: very often people's beliefs and actions cannot be described or explained without taking

their religion into account. But we can accept others' religiosity as a fact without sharing it. Only someone foolish and reductionist enough to dismiss religious beliefs as irrelevant to the "real" well-springs of action would object.

Surely secularism should not be confused with the extravagant claim that religious belief is itself unreal, or (more credibly) that it is just a bizarre epiphenomenon, a froth of surface foam irrelevant to the real workings of human psychology. Secularism, as I have always understood it, is the belief that the world of common human experience, the world that science studies and (with great though as yet imperfect success) explains, is all there is; it dismisses the supernatural, but not the obvious, important, and perfectly secular fact of widespread belief in the supernatural. In this sense I remain an unrepentant secularist—as, I suspect, Brooks himself does.

Bryson Brown
Lethbridge, Alberta

David Brooks confuses rising numbers of religious followers with the increasing popularity of religion. An increase in the numbers of Christians or Muslims, for example, is a result of population growth and recruitment from other religions. In making his case he cites figures of 10 million Christians in Africa in 1900 and 360 million Christians today. So what? Population growth and switching religious affiliations do not indicate that religion itself is more attractive or important in Africa today than it has been at any other time.

The growing number of atheists and nonreligious people around the world indicates that, yes, the world is becoming more secular. A thousand years ago one would have had to search long and hard to discover a few atheists. Today, however, people without religion are tens of millions strong (nearly 30 million in the United States alone, according to a recent survey by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York). The gross numbers of religious followers may be up, but the ratio of believers to nonbelievers is slipping.

Guy Harrison
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands

Advice & Consent

In "Long Shot" (May *Atlantic*), Gregg Easterbrook says, regarding a satellite in orbit 22,300 miles above the Equator, "In this orbit an object hangs the same distance from Earth as Earth is around."

In fact the period of an Earth satellite in a circular orbit (around the Equator) depends only on the radius of that orbit. If you want the period to be one day, then the height of the satellite above the Equator is indeed about 22,300 miles. If Earth turned faster or slower than it does, to keep the satellite geostationary the height of its orbit would have to be changed. But in no case is there a relationship between the radius of the orbit and the circumference of Earth, which is (at the Equator) about 24,900 miles.

Gerald Weinstein
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

James Wood's excellent discussion of Henry James's "fruitless flirtation with the theater" ("Cult of the Master," April *Atlantic*) stopped short of consid-

ering the success of James's works as television plays, particularly those staged for television by the BBC. (Movies have been a different story altogether.) Of the many James works successfully dramatized for television, *The Spoils of Poynton*, with Gemma Jones unforgettable as Fleda, revealed the author to be a master dramatist who finally found the medium he needed.

Kenneth Mason
Sunset, Maine

In her otherwise splendid review "The Baby Experts" (May *Atlantic*), Sandra Tsing Loh says that John Broadus Watson's writing style was like that of his "college classmate H. L. Mencken." Sadly, neither Watson nor anyone else had the pleasure of Mencken's company as a student; Mencken did not go to college.

Constantine von Hoffman
Boston, Mass.

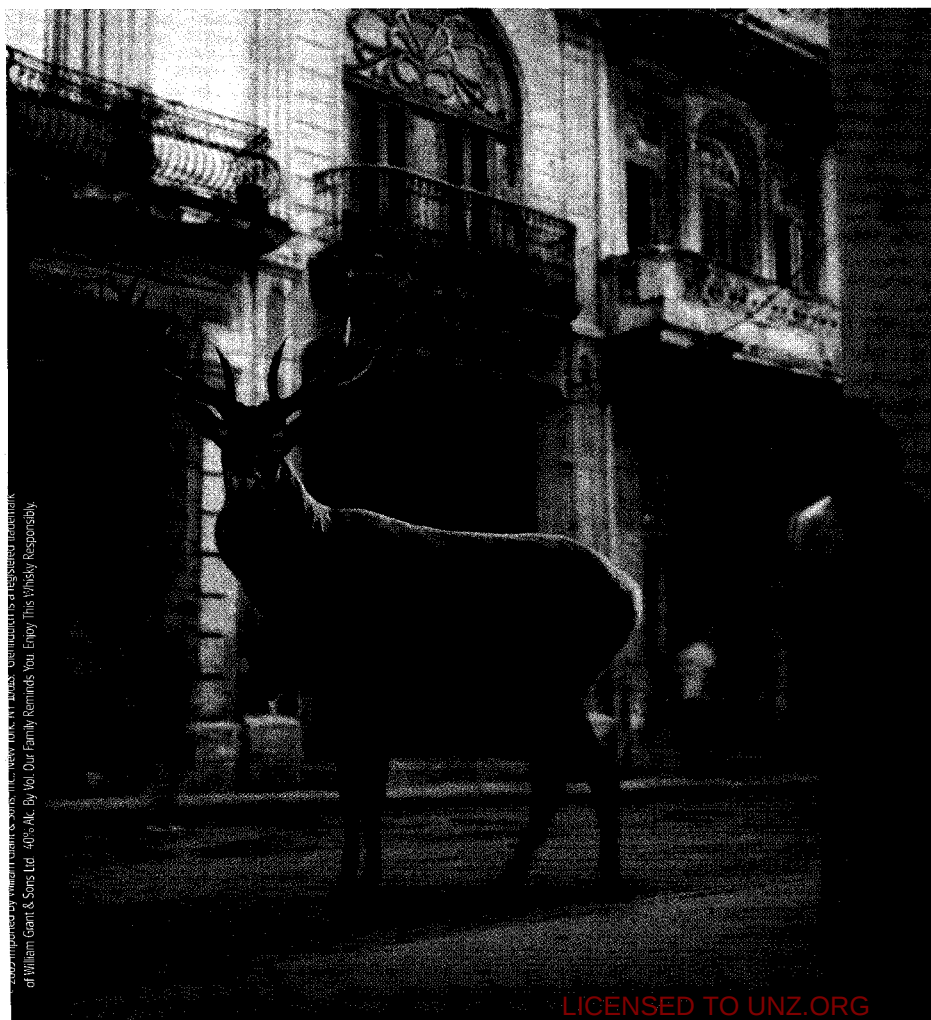
Julius Lester's letter to the editor (April *Atlantic*) says that "Malcolm X appeared on the Pierre Breton show ..." "Breton" should have been "Berton."

Pierre Berton was not only a distinguished broadcaster and interviewer but also one of Canada's most beloved authors.

Paul Truster
Toronto, Ontario

I teach a graduate course in team building and engage my students with real-life work situations in which they must try to resolve conflict. With considerable joy I read them the cell-phone incident in "Wynton's Blues," by David Hajdu (March *Atlantic*): how Marsalis's performance was rudely interrupted by a cell-phone melody and how he handled it: first playing it note for note; then improvising it until he regained the audience's attention; then resolving it and returning to the precise point where he had left off in the ballad he'd been playing; and finally being rewarded by an ovation. You could have heard a pin drop in my class when I finished reading. Connection recovered; magic shared. Where would we be without artists?

Ernie Wormwood
Leonardtown, Md.



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THE AGENDA

THIS MONTH, *melting into America; luring good teachers with lucre; not scarce but dirty water*

JONATHAN RAUCH

"Washington, for so long a lagging indicator of American social life ... is now, of all things, a harbinger. Increasingly, the Washington area is the post-racial America that we have all been told to expect."

PAGE 30

MATTHEW MILLER

"Research shows that much of the achievement gap facing poor and minority students comes ... from systemic differences in teacher quality; thus recruiting better teachers for poor schools is not only the biggest issue in education but the next great frontier for social justice." PAGE 32

PRIMARY SOURCES

"Everybody is familiar with ... the color-coded hierarchy of terror alerts devised by the Office of Homeland Security in the aftermath of 9/11. Now a new alert system has been announced: the Privacy Threat Index."

PAGE 38

THE WORLD IN NUMBERS

"Sixty-eight percent of the earth's fresh water is locked up in ice caps and glaciers, and more than 31 percent is buried deep underground. Less than one percent ... is easily accessible runoff—though even that tiny sliver represents about 524,151 gallons annually for each one of us."

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THE TRANSFORMER

Is Tony Blair what Bill Clinton should have been?

BY DAVID BROOKS

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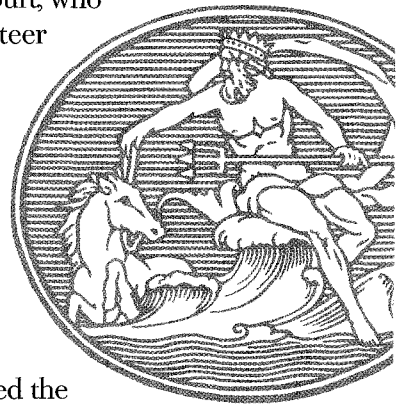
Over the past few months, while much of the world has been watching Tony Blair the world statesman, I've been thinking about Tony Blair the young rock-concert promoter. In 1971 the future Prime Minister had just graduated from the elite Scottish prep school Fettes; a year later he was to attend St. John's College at Oxford. During the interim he went to London, grew his hair shoulder-length, wore a modish fur coat, and hung out with a crowd of hard-partying rich kids, trying to discover the next Rolling Stones.

Blair bought a van, gathered some stray musicians into a band called Jaded, set about booking it into pubs, and cruised teen gathering spots handing out leaflets for its gigs. He met a man named Norman Burt, who owned two semidetached houses in London; Burt let students live in one of them, and he lived in the other. Blair quickly wheedled his way into a room. It wasn't in the raucous youths' house, however; he lived in the quieter Burt house, and he helped Burt, who was something of a God-squadder, as a volunteer at Christian youth groups. The funny thing is, Blair never used drugs. Three years ago *The Spectator* and the *Mail on Sunday* investigated his activities during that year, a year largely missing from Blair biographies. People they interviewed recalled that Blair could do a mean Mick Jagger impersonation; they all said he didn't indulge in the pot and acid that were all around.

Blair, who turned fifty in May, has transformed the Labour Party. He has pioneered a Third Way philosophy that has allowed him to dominate the political landscape of his nation. He took a courageous stand on Iraq, facing millions of protesters who marched against him, and became the most eloquent proponent of the war.

Although in many ways Blair has lived a quintessential Baby Boomer's life, there is an air of loneliness and detachment about him. Imagine him as an eighteen-year-old that year in London—wearing the right clothes, apparently popular with the ladies, but passing the bong without ever taking a hit. Picture him handing out concert flyers on Saturday night, which was a fashionable activity, and handing out church announcements on Sunday morning, which was not.

In some sense Blair has built his career on loneliness and detachment. Ideologically he is not clearly aligned with any one group but



occupies a point midway between the Thatcherites and the old Labourites. Politically he now occupies a point midway between Europe and the United States, with no firm alignment with either. In Britain, although he is seen as the giant of the age, he is appreciated but not loved. He is too earnest in a political culture that is pervasively cynical. He is too straightforwardly ambitious in a country that detests that quality. He has no deep roots in any region or political faction.

The turning point in Blair's life, as every biography makes clear, occurred when he was eleven. His father, then a prominent barrister and a rising figure in the Conservative Party, had a debilitating stroke, nearly died, and lost the ability to speak for three years. Although Blair senior was a nonbeliever, on the day of the stroke the headmaster of Blair's school and Blair prayed together, thus planting the germ of what became Blair's unusually strong religious faith. "My father's illness impressed on me from an early age that life was going to be a struggle, and there were a lot of losers," Blair has said. He tells his children, "Life isn't easy. You have to make your own way, and no one will do you any favors."

Blair did not participate in student politics at Oxford, nor did he show much interest in public affairs. In 1972 left-wing students occupied an administration building, but Blair did not get involved. Instead he joined a rock band, the Ugly Rumours, a name taken from the cover of a Grateful Dead album. He was a charismatic figure and had a string of girlfriends, but he was also known to be a hard worker—someone who would disappear from parties after midnight to hit the books. During that time he discovered the writings of the philosopher John Macmurray.

Shortly after becoming the leader of the Labour Party, Blair said, "If you really want to understand what I'm all about, you have to take a look at a guy called John Macmurray. It's all there." Macmurray was a Christian socialist who after World War II became a pacifist and joined the Society of Friends. He emphasized social action and is sometimes credited with having invented communitarianism.

Macmurray rejected politics as it is traditionally understood, with its emphasis on conflict, competition,

argued that it is sometimes necessary to use force against evil in order to create an environment conducive to building community.

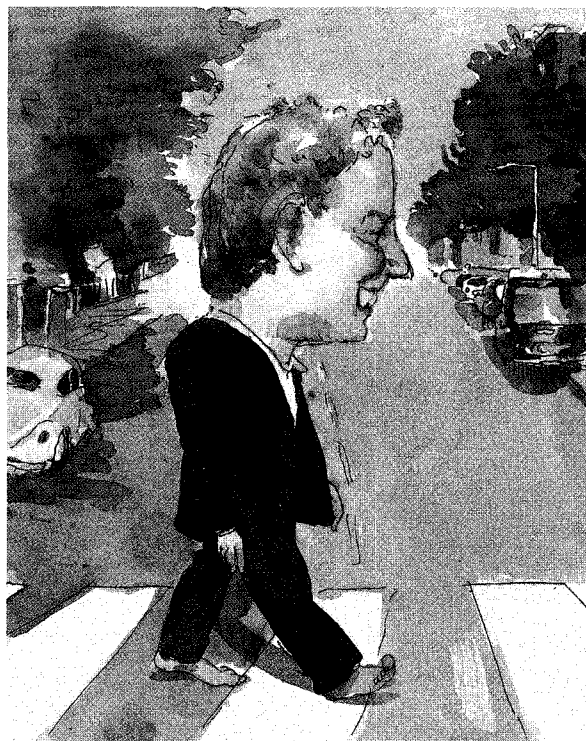
Also obviously, Blair does not reject party politics. But, influenced by Macmurray, he tends to use political means to achieve post-political ends. He can be a ruthless leader, and he has mastered all the tricks of modern politics (focus groups, sound bites, branding), but he uses them mostly in pursuit of his gauzy communitarian vision. Even more than Bill Clinton, Blair has spent

his life trying to bridge the divide between left and right. Even more than Clinton, he views the family as the most important social institution, as the seedbed of love, trust, and responsibility.

A frequent paradox of communitarianism is that whereas more-traditional politicians, who are not averse to conflict, bind themselves firmly and fiercely to one party or team that helps them attain their goals, the peace-loving communitarian is often more or less alone, dreaming of an abstract community but lacking in the here and now an intimate group to help realize the vision. While other students at Oxford were banding together and issuing angry manifestos, Blair was charting

his own course, and showing no signs of anger or alienation. He moved to London and trained to be a barrister; he had little interest in political office until he met his future wife, Cherie Booth, who had earlier in her life talked about becoming Britain's first woman Prime Minister. Both Cherie and Blair unsuccessfully sought a Labour Party nomination for Parliament in 1981; Blair won a seat in Parliament in 1983.

At first Blair went along with the Labour Party doctrines of the day—



opposition groups, and partisanship. He regarded the family as the primary unit of society, and believed that people should come together to form communities based on friendship, love, and the Golden Rule. He argued that it is the job of citizens to heal rifts and build partnerships.

Obviously, Blair has not followed Macmurray all the way to his pacifist and Quaker destination. During the debate over Kosovo he delivered a speech in Chicago titled "Doctrine of International Community." In it he

unilateral disarmament, the nationalization of industry, withdrawal from the European Community—without fervently believing in them. He gradually discovered his own style of politics, which almost always involves reconciling opposites: fiscal discipline with social spending, tough anti-crime policies with compassionate welfare support, the free market with government activism. Blair rarely went out dining or drinking with members of his party, preferring to go home to his wife and kids. In social situations, I'm told, he can be strangely businesslike, steering the conversation to a single subject and then probing for information, rather than engaging in anything resembling small talk or banter.

"There has always been something of a Jesus complex about Tony Blair," *The Spectator* recently commented. "It suits him, temperamentally, to evangelize, to parade the passion of his belief, and to accept the devotion of his followers." That passage captures the ambivalence that many Britons feel about Blair; it also points to an odd truth about him. Blair has little innate interest in traditional politics, in the sort of coalition-building and deal-brokering that so obsessed, say, Lyndon Johnson and Franklin Roosevelt. He has none of the quality, common to Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher, that inclines politicians to seek greatness through combat, through bravery against foes and loyalty to friends. He entirely lacks the traditional outlook of the European statesman—the view that history deals you certain conditions, and you simply do the best you can.

Blair is impatient with the status quo and can be grand in his ambitions. "Jesus was a modernizer," he once commented. And although he does not wear his religious faith on his sleeve, and is as liberal on abortion and other social issues as any of his secular compatriots, he appears to be motivated by a pre-political moral idealism. He aims to be what Thatcher once said

he already was—"a decent Christian gentleman."

Watching him on the campaign trail, Joe Klein, then of *The New Yorker*, observed that Blair suffered from "a generational disease, a perennial callowness that seems to afflict those of us who were born in the years immediately after the Second World War." Klein continued, "Perhaps it is the absence of great issues, great crises; perhaps it is simply the absence of suffering—but baby-boom politicians, even in middle age, still seem like helium-filled dilettantes."

This is no longer quite true of Blair. He risked his political career on a single moral proposition: that it was right to use U.S. and British strength to liberate the people of Iraq. Whatever one thinks of his specific policies, one has to recognize that this points to something in him deeper and more interesting than previously seen. In waging a struggle on behalf of such a widely unpopular cause, Blair has emerged as the world's greatest Baby Boomer—the figure Bill Clinton wanted to be. Perhaps we are beginning to see in him what Baby Boomer gravitas will look like: a little self-righteous, in keeping with the generational mode; a little utopian, because Baby Boomers always did believe that theirs was the most gifted generation and was meant to solve the problems of humankind; a little self-absorbed and self-indulgent; but also admirably independent and self-confident. At least in the case of Tony Blair, the stubborn idealism compensates for and even redeems the annoyances.

Boomers grew up drunk on idealism and have always spent an inordinate amount of time congratulating themselves for this quality. As Blair's example suggests, their idealism may mature, taking on a serious and productive form. Here's hoping. ▀

David Brooks, an Atlantic correspondent, is also a contributing editor of Newsweek, a senior editor of The Weekly Standard, and a political analyst for The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer.

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COMING TO AMERICA

With its diverse and dispersed immigrants, our nation's capital is a model of the post-racial society we've been awaiting

The Au family, immigrants from Hong Kong, arrived at Washington's Reagan National Airport on a sticky night late last July. I will never forget the sight of them: parents bustling after the long flight, children—three girls and a boy, ranging in age from eight to thirteen—heaped sleepily atop sixteen suitcases, as if the whole bunch had tumbled off the baggage belt.

They settled into a little townhouse in Arlington, Virginia, two AUs per bedroom and two more in the basement: spacious, by Hong Kong standards. The place belongs to my partner, Michael, who is brother to Mrs. Au, uncle to the children, and sponsor, for immigration purposes, of the entire family. He had applied for green cards for the AUs more than ten years ago, when he became a citizen himself. When permission to immigrate finally came, the AUs, a middle-class family headed by a recently retired civil servant, seized the chance.

For newcomers America is full of footholds. The AUs, Christians, immediately found a Chinese church only a couple of miles from home. Every Sunday they attend services in Cantonese. If they want bok choy or fried dace or duck's blood, they can walk to an Asian grocery just down the block.

In Hong Kong—where, because of its history as a British colony, many people use English names—the girls were called Queenie, Amanda, and Cassandra, the boy Bryan. In America, Bryan has become Chi-hang. That is the name in the official records, so that is what his school calls him—and anyway, isn't it more interesting than boring old "Bryan"? Asked which he prefers, the boy says that in Hong Kong he liked Bryan and in America he likes Chi-hang. This seems to him a perfectly natural arrangement. Clearly, the melting pot has changed since my grandmother passed through Ellis Island, in 1910.

Still, the mysterious process known as Americanization carries on. In the

public schools, the Au children struggle with English but steadily improve. True to stereotype, they are whizzes at math. Last September, when I asked Bryan, who is ten, what he thought of life in the United States, he exclaimed, "I like!" (the first English sentence I heard from him). His older sister Amanda, a seventh-grader, was soon tying up the phone talking with her American friends.

When I moved to the northern-Virginia suburbs from central Washington, D.C., a couple of years ago, I expected to find Confederate flags and cured hams. Instead I found the Eden Center, where the flag that flies next to Old Glory is Vietnam's, and where you can have your pho with bible tripe and soft tendon. Eden Center is an all-Vietnamese shopping mall: Vietnamese restaurants, video stores, hair salons, travel agencies, jewelers, grocers, music shops, bakeries. Even the Muzak is Vietnamese. The place is packed every day, and not much English is heard there. For a long time, though, a red banner hung beneath its gate: "Soul and heart of the Vietnamese community always with the 9-11 tragedy."

The long-standing meta-narrative of Washington is that of a black urban core locked in uneasy truce with its rootless white suburbs. A 2001 study by the Brookings Institution's Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, however, contains surprising news for people who still see the city and its environs in those terms. "Unlike some other major immigrant destinations such as Miami or Los Angeles, where one or two immigrant groups tend to predominate," says the study, "Washington's flow is diverse." Nearly two hundred countries are represented, with the top ten spanning Central America (El Salvador), South America (Peru), Asia (Vietnam, China, South Korea), Africa (Ethiopia), the Middle East (Iran), Oceania (the Philippines), and the Subcontinent (India and Pakistan).

Moreover, each of the ten metropolitan Washington zip codes with the most new immigrants draws from more than a hundred countries. In other words, instead of settling into separate ethnic neighborhoods, as Italians and Irish and Jews and Chinese did a century ago, the new arrivals scatter. In yet other words, they integrate. They work beside native-born Americans, they live beside them, and they suffer beside them. The third victim of the Washington-area sniper last year was a taxi driver named Premkumar Walekar, originally from Pune, India. He was shot while pumping gas, the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "moments after buying a newspaper, a lottery ticket and a pack of gum."

Washington, for so long a lagging indicator of American social life—far behind edgy New York and buzzy L.A. and brazen Chicago and even upstart Atlanta and Houston—is now, of all things, a harbinger. Increasingly, the Washington area is the post-racial America that we have all been told to expect. A member of Congress who wonders what a genuinely multicultural country might look like need only rustle up taxi fare to Arlington and walk around. My immediate neighbors include a black-white couple, a Filipino psychiatrist, a Korean accountant, and two Indian families, whose kids' names I can't pronounce. I have never lived in a more neighborly neighborhood. If this is the future, it seems to work.

When spring finally sprang this year, I came home one Sunday afternoon to find our place aswarm with AUs, the four children bantering in Cantonese with an occasional aside to me in shy English. Under Michael's direction this Chinese task force had descended on the yard to plant flowers. Thus does new growth take root in northern Virginia, rejuvenating the soil. This Independence Day will be the Au children's first in America. Through their eyes I will see the fireworks afresh. ▀

Jonathan Rauch is an Atlantic correspondent.

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RAUCH**

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A NEW DEAL FOR TEACHERS

Here's how to fix our desperate urban schools: attract better teachers by paying them more—much more—but tie compensation to performance and allow districts to fire bad teachers quickly

No one should need convincing that schools in the nation's poor districts are in crisis. A recent Department of Education study found that fourth-grade students in low-income areas tested three grade levels behind students in higher-income areas. "Most 4th graders who live in U.S. cities can't read and understand a simple children's book," a special report in *Education Week* concluded a few years ago, "and most 8th graders can't use arithmetic to solve a practical problem."

There are probably a hundred things these schools need, and ten things that could make a very big difference, but if we had to focus on only one thing, the most important would be improving teacher quality. Owing to rising enrollments and a coming wave of retirements, more than two million teachers must be recruited over the next decade—700,000 of them in poor districts. That means fully two thirds of the teacher corps will be new to the job. Finding top talent and not simply warm bodies is a tall order, especially in urban districts, where half of new teachers quit within three years (and studies suggest that it's the smarter half). Research shows that much of the achievement gap facing poor and minority students comes not from poverty or family conditions but from systemic differences in teacher quality; thus recruiting better teachers for poor schools is not only the biggest issue in education but the next great frontier for social justice.

The obstacles to improving teacher quality are great. Good teachers in urban schools have told me with dismay of the incompetence of many of their colleagues. The state competency requirements that aspiring teachers must meet are appallingly low. The late Albert Shanker, the legendary president of the American Federation of Teachers, once said that most of the state tests are so easy to pass that they

keep only "illiterates" out of teaching. Yet even these minimal standards are routinely waived so that districts can issue "emergency credentials"; in our biggest cities as many as half of new hires, and up to a quarter of city teachers overall, aren't properly trained or credentialed.

EDUCATION
**MATTHEW
MILLER**

The situation may soon get even worse, because many of the teachers now reaching retirement age are among the best in the system. Until the 1960s and 1970s schools attracted talented women and minority members to whom most higher-paying careers weren't open. Now people who might once have taught science or social studies become doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Salaries that start, on average, at \$29,000 simply can't compete with the pay in other professions. In 1970 in New York City a lawyer starting out at a prestigious firm and a teacher going into public education had a difference in their salaries of about \$2,000. Today that lawyer makes \$145,000 (including bonus), whereas the teacher earns roughly \$40,000. Sandra Feldman, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, is quite open about the problem. "You have in the schools right now, among the teachers who are going to be retiring, *very* smart people," she told me. "We're not getting in the same kinds of people. In some places it's disastrous."

How should we address this crisis? Most discussion so far has revolved around improving the skills of the teachers we already have. But upgrading the skills of current teachers can get us only so far when so many new teachers will be needed. Although changing the kind of person who goes into teaching may be hopelessly beyond the power of local school budgets and policies, we need to seize this moment of generational turnover in the teaching ranks to lure top college graduates to our toughest classrooms.

How to do this? Let's stipulate first that pay isn't everything. Teachers are the only category of people I've ever met who routinely say, without irony, that their jobs are so fulfilling they hardly care how little they make. For many of them, too, job security, good health benefits and pensions, and free summers offset the low income. But fulfillment and fringe benefits will never suffice to attract and retain hundreds of thousands of talented new teachers for poor districts.

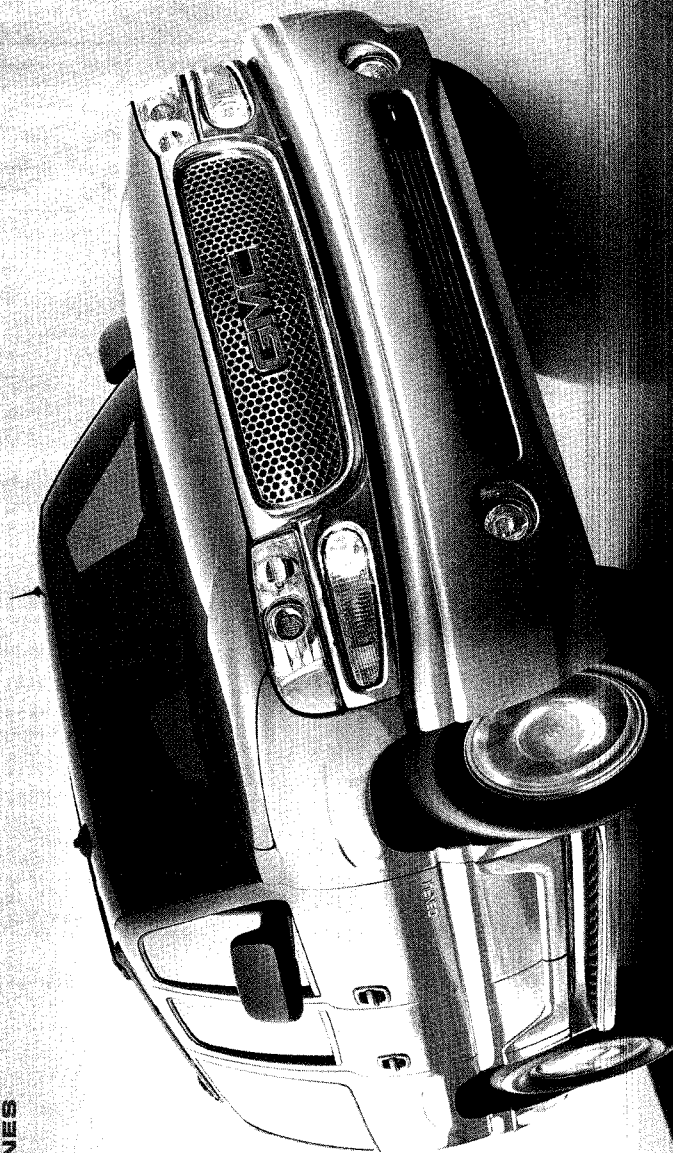
There's no way to get large numbers of top people without paying up. Conservatives rightly worry that pouring more money into the system will subsidize mediocrity rather than lure new talent—especially when union rules make it next to impossible to fire bad teachers. "Dismissing a tenured teacher is not a process," one California official has said. "It's a career." The effort can take years and involve hundreds of thousands of dollars. Rather than being fired, bad teachers are shuffled from school to school. In a recent five-year period only sixty-two of the 220,000 tenured teachers in California were dismissed.

A grand bargain could be struck between unions and conservatives: make more money available for teachers' salaries in exchange for flexibility in how it is spent. For instance, the standard "lockstep" union pay scale, whereby a teacher with a degree in biochemistry has to be paid the same as one with a degree in physical education if both have the same number of years in the classroom (even though the biochemist has lucrative options outside teaching), should be scrapped. Better-performing teachers should make more than worse ones. And dismissing poor performers—who, even union leaders agree, make up perhaps 10 percent of urban teachers—should be made much easier.

If the quality of urban schools is to be improved, teaching poor children must become the career of choice for

"ALONE AT LAST."

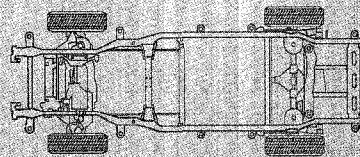
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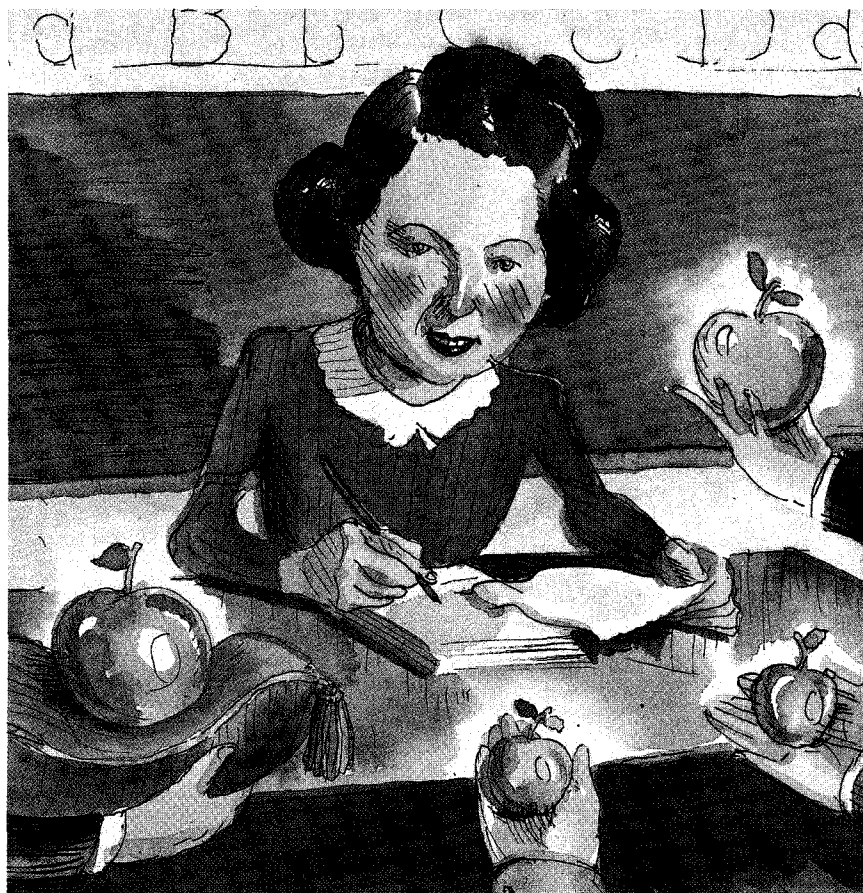
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talented young Americans who want to make a difference with their lives and earn a good living too. To achieve that the federal government should raise the salary of every teacher in a poor school by at least *50 percent*. But this increase would be contingent on two fundamental reforms: teachers' unions would have to abandon the lockstep pay schedules, so that the top-performing half of the teacher corps could be paid significantly more; and the dismissal process for poor-performing teachers would have to be condensed to four to six months.

In Los Angeles teachers currently earn about \$40,000 to start and top out, after thirty years and a Ph.D., at about \$70,000. Under this new deal those teachers would start at \$60,000, and the top-performing half of teachers would make \$85,000 to \$90,000 a year, on average. A number of the best teachers could earn close to \$150,000 a year. The plan is designed to pay America's best teachers of poor students salaries high enough to allow them to put aside a million dollars in savings by the end of their careers.

How much would this plan cost? Roughly \$30 billion a year, which would lift the federal share of K-12 spending from seven percent to 14 percent of the total nationwide—only right, given that on their own poor districts can't afford the skilled teachers they need. This federal investment looks modest beside the \$80 billion a year that some representatives of corporate America say they spend training ill-prepared high school graduates to work in modern industry. The plan could be administered through a program similar to Title I, which provides supplementary federal funds to poor schools. We might call it Title I for Teachers.

To find out whether this basic plan is politically feasible, I presented it to big-city superintendents, high-ranking union leaders, and assorted education experts and teachers.

"I'd endorse something like that in a hot minute," said Day Higuchi, the president of the Los Angeles teachers' union from 1996 to 2002. "Right now L.A. Unified is the employer of last

resort. People who can't get jobs elsewhere come here. If we did this, we'd become the employer of first resort. High-powered college students will be taking the job." Arne Duncan, the CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, told me that now there's "very little incentive outside of pure altruism" to get someone into teaching. This proposal "would dramatically change the face of the teacher profession," he said.

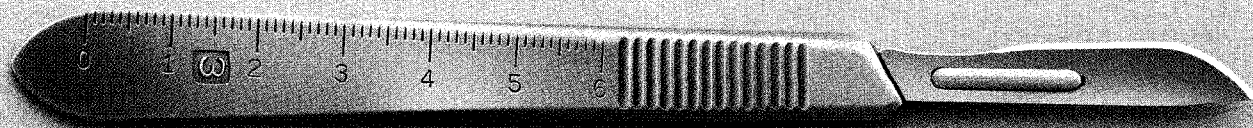
To gauge the conservative reaction, I spoke with Chester E. Finn Jr., a longtime school reformer on the right. Finn is the president of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and served as an assistant secretary of education in the Reagan Administration. He expressed several concerns. "The troubling part of this proposal," he said, "is a 50 percent boost for just showing up for work, without any reference to whether anybody you teach learns a damned thing."

I replied that the offer was designed to make it worthwhile for the unions to accept real reform in pay and dismissal practices. And the pay increase would subsidize mediocrity only briefly, because under the new dismissal rules bad teachers could much more easily be fired.

Finn had his own variation to offer. "If you wanted to make this plan really interesting," he told me, "job security and tenure would be traded for this raise. The swap here ought to be that you take a risk with your employment and you don't have to be retained if you're not good at what you do. If you are good and you get retained, you get paid a whole lot more money. If current teachers can't swallow that tradeoff, make this a parallel personnel system for new ones coming in and for the existing ones who want to do it."

How might that work? I asked.

"Any current teacher is free to join this new system on its terms," Finn said, "or to stick with the old arrangement, in which they have high security and low pay. That's just a political accommodation to an existing work force for



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1. Blasko JC, Grimm PD, Sylvester JE, Badiozamani KR, Hoak D, Cavanaugh W, "Palladium-103 Brachytherapy for Prostate Carcinoma," *Int J Radiat Oncol Biol Phys*, March 2000, 46(4), 839-850.
 2. Potosky AL, Legler J, Albertsen PC, Stanford JL, Gilliland FD, Hamilton AS, et al. Health Outcomes After Radical Prostatectomy or Radiotherapy for Clinically Localized Prostate Cancer: Results from the Prostate Cancer Outcomes Study (PCOS). *J Natl Cancer Inst* 2000; 92:1582-1592.
 3. The most commonly reported side effects of prostate brachytherapy are short-term urinary or obstructive symptoms within the first few weeks after the implant procedure.

whom this might be too abrupt a shift. Over time you'll get a very different kind of person into teaching."

"It sounds tempting from a union point of view," Sandra Feldman told me of Finn's parallel approach. "The more voluntary you can make a system like this, the easier it is to sell. But I worry that something like that could create resentment between the people in the different tracks." Other union and district leaders, however, told me they thought that virtually every new hire would opt for the new system, as would perhaps a quarter of the senior teachers—meaning that most of the urban teacher corps would be on the plan within five years.

That union leaders think it makes sense to move toward serious pay differentials for teachers is important. But educators are concerned about two related questions. In determining pay rates, who will decide which teachers are better performers? And what standards will be used to assess teachers?

I asked Sandra Feldman if there was a consensus in the faculty lounges at most schools about who the best teachers were. "Absolutely," she said. The question is how to evaluate performance in a way that is objective and untainted by cronyism.

The superintendents and conservative reformers I spoke to agreed that serious weight should be given to students' test scores. In theory, so-called "value-added analysis"—the effort to track the impact of teachers on student achievement each year—is the holy grail of accountability, and thus the ideal basis for performance pay. But in reality, many people think it has serious limits. "There's just no reliable way of doing that right now," Feldman told me. This isn't only a union view. Joseph Olchefske, the superintendent of schools in Seattle, has studied the issue; he believes it would be hard to measure the value added by individual teachers. Others, however, think individual value-added

analysis may soon be practical. Day Higuchi, the former L.A. union leader, argues that in elementary school, where each child has essentially one teacher, the right testing could constructively measure that teacher's impact.

Finn and others suggested a blended approach to teacher assessment. "You could have value-added analysis at the school level, which is clearly going to be done," Finn said, "combined with some other kind of performance reviews." Adam Urbanski, the president of the Rochester Teachers Association, who has spearheaded union-reform efforts for two decades, said, "It would be a fatal mistake not to include student learning outcomes as the ultimate test of this. It would be equally fatal to use only test scores, because you would have a huge invitation to cheating and manipulation." He and others proposed that various indicators regarded as germane to teacher assessment by educators and the public—such as dropout rates, graduation rates, peer review, specialized training, teaching technique, and student work—be considered along with test scores.

The superintendents all told me that principals should be the final arbiters of teacher performance. This is a sticking point with the unions. The problem with giving principals control is that many teachers think principals don't know the first thing about good teaching. Jene Galvin, a teacher who has worked in the Cincinnati school system for twenty-seven years, told me, "We don't really believe that the principals are the experts on pedagogy or classroom teaching or classroom management. The reason is they just didn't do it very long." The solution might be to have peer evaluators—mentor and master teachers—do the evaluations along with principals.

Experts I spoke with, including Finn, thought that all these challenges ultimately seemed surmountable. Finn said that a key to his supporting such a plan would be "that it included the abil-

ity for managers of schools to have a whole lot of control over who is working in their school."

If this agenda were presented as a federal challenge, in which the President or congressional leaders said, "We're putting this pot of money on the table for those communities that can come together around a plan that meets its conditions and make it work," school districts would almost surely step forward. If unions declined to come to the table, local media and business leaders could ask why they were balking at billions of dollars. Rank-and-file teachers, who might earn an extra \$20,000 to \$50,000 a year, would obviously have a huge stake in the plan's adoption. They might tell union leaders they supported finding ways of speedily dismissing poor performers.

Some Republicans may resist. After all, teachers' unions are big Democratic donors and the chief foes of Republican efforts to introduce school vouchers. The last thing we need, these Republicans might say, is a bunch of teachers with more money to spend on making sure that Republicans never get elected.

But some savvy Republicans think the time for a plan like this is ripe. Rick Davis, a political adviser to Senator John McCain, believes that such a plan may be inevitable. "Anybody who has looked at teacher pay as an element of the overall problem in education realizes that money matters," Davis told me. "Other than the voucher debate, we've exhausted the Republican position on education. So sooner or later we're going to get to teacher pay, because we can't be against teachers' making money. The American public is going to figure out that their teachers make less than their garbage collectors, and they're not going to be for that." ■

Matthew Miller is a consultant and a syndicated columnist. This article is drawn from his book The Two Percent Solution: Fixing America's Problems in Ways Liberals and Conservatives Can Love, to be published in September by PublicAffairs.



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PRIMARY SOURCES

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Deadliest War

What conflict has taken more lives than any other since World War II? Don't look to Asia, the Balkans, the Middle East, or even Rwanda for the answer. According to a recent mortality study released by the International Rescue Committee, the record breaker—by far—is the ongoing and under-reported war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). The IRC estimates that since the conflict began, in 1998, some 3.3 million "excess deaths" have occurred—that is, deaths from combat and from "easily treatable diseases and malnutrition, linked to displacement and the collapse of much of the country's health system and economy." (The rate of deaths in the second category rises and falls proportionally with the rate in the first.) Young children in particular have suffered: in three of the ten zones described in the IRC report, more than half of all children born since the conflict began have died by the age of two. As a result of the conflict the DRC now has a mortality rate of at least 2.2 people per thousand per month—the highest in the world, according to UN figures, and twice the African average.

— "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Results From a Nationwide Survey," International Rescue Committee

How Bad Was Jenin?

The battle of Jenin—an eight-day clash that took place at a West Bank refugee camp in April of 2002 between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian militants—was a notoriously bloody one. According to the United Nations, twenty-three Israeli soldiers and fifty-two Palestinians, including many civilians, were killed, and many of the camp's houses were destroyed or seriously damaged in the fighting. Visiting Jenin shortly after the battle, Terje Larsen, the UN envoy to the Middle East, described the scene as "horrific beyond belief" and added, "We have expert people here who have been in war zones

and earthquakes, and they say they have never seen anything like it." In an article to be published this summer in the Israeli journal *Azure*, the military historian Yagil Henkin puts the battle of Jenin in context, however, by focusing on "how other armies have acted in similar circumstances"—namely, in urban warfare. The most horrifying example (*pace* Larsen) came in Chechnya, in the 1994–1996 battle of Grozny, where in the first days alone the Russian army lost 1,500 to 2,000 soldiers and responded with a bombing campaign that at its peak struck the city with 4,000 shells an hour. Half of Grozny, which had been home to more than 300,000 people, was reduced to rubble, and many thousands of civilians were killed. But Henkin lists other examples, too—among them NATO's 1999 bombing of the Serbian village of Korisa (which NATO argued was "a legitimate military target," although about a hundred civilians were killed) and the UN's own action in Mogadishu in 1993 (which cost the lives of scores of UN soldiers and a much higher but undetermined number of Somalis). He concludes by noting that although Israel's behavior in Jenin was "not flawless," the number of Palestinian civilians killed—twenty-two, according to Human Rights Watch—was nowhere near the several hundred that Palestinians initially claimed. In fact, he writes, it was "smaller than the number of losses among the Israeli force that moved into the camp—a ratio unprecedented in the history of urban combat, reflecting an unparalleled policy of self-restraint in hostile territory."

— "Urban Warfare and the Lessons of Jenin," by Yagil Henkin, *Azure*

THE NATION

Incarceration Nation

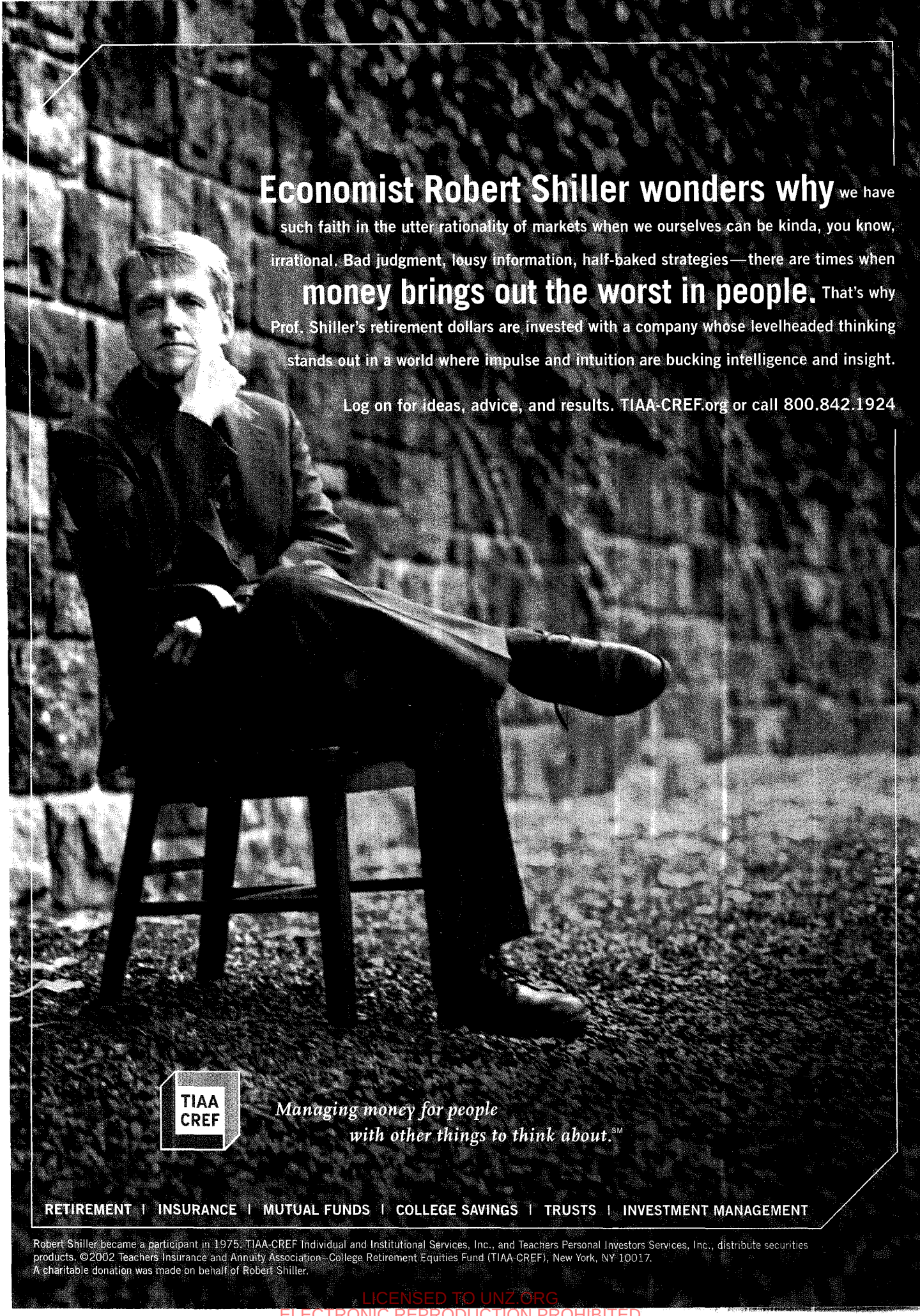
Each year the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics publishes a study on the population of America's correctional institutions. This year's

study—which looks at numbers from midyear 2002—highlights a time of firsts. The proportion of African-American men aged twenty to thirty-four who are incarcerated, for example, has never been higher: the figure, which has been rising in recent years, reached 12 percent in 2002 (as opposed to just 1.6 percent among white men in the same age group). That's the percentage behind bars at just one time, of course; the BJS has estimated that black men have more than one chance in four of being incarcerated during their lifetimes. The report also reveals that in 2002 the number of prisoners in the United States exceeded two million for the first time. The five states with the highest rates per 100,000 residents (ranging, in descending order, from 799 inmates to 593) were Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Oklahoma, and Alabama; those with the lowest rates (ranging, in ascending order, from 137 to 197) were Maine, Minnesota, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.

— "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2002," Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin

Draining Your Reserves

Recently a bipartisan congressional delegation—led by Representative John M. McHugh, of New York, the chairman of the deliciously named Subcommittee on Total Force—visited the U.S. military's European Command in order to assess the new and increased role that U.S. reserve forces are playing around the world. After the Vietnam War, which was fought with very little help from reservists, the United States developed its Total Force Policy, which, according to the delegation's report, "stipulated the close integration of the active and reserve components to ensure that the American military would never again go to war without the reserve components." At the time of the policy's inception, however, nobody anticipated just how much and how rapidly the role of the reserve forces would grow. During the past seven years, for example,



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reservists have supplied the military with annual *peacetime* support equivalent to 33,000 active-duty soldiers, and have replaced full-time soldiers in the kind of active-duty missions from which reservists were once excluded. Now, of course, there's also the open-ended and global war on terrorism, for which more than 50,000 reservists have been called to active duty, with thousands already moving into their second year of service. Finally, add to that the approximately 100,000 reservists called up for the recent Iraq war, along with the possibility of call-ups for other short-term military mobilizations in the coming decades. It all adds up to what the report refers to as "extraordinary management and resource challenges" for the military and "significant stresses on the individual members of the reserve components, their employers and their families."

—Report to Duncan Hunter, chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, delivered by Representatives John M. McHugh, Robin Hayes, Mike McIntyre, and Jeff Miller

SOCIETY

The Privacy Threat Index

Everybody is familiar with the Homeland Security Advisory System—the color-coded hierarchy of terror alerts devised by the Office of Homeland Security in the aftermath of 9/11. Now a new alert system has been announced: the Privacy Threat Index. As one might expect, it's not a federal initiative. The idea comes from the Electronic Privacy Information Center, an influential privacy-rights organization based in Washington, D.C., which devised the index in response to what it worries is the government's growing use of surveillance as part of the war on terrorism. EPIC uses the same color scheme and threat levels the government does—green (low), blue (guarded), yellow (elevated), orange (high), red (severe)—and put its initial privacy threat at yellow. That was an assessment based on "developments during the past year," which include (to quote from EPIC):

- Expanded use of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which permits the government to conduct surveillance without the general safeguards required by the Fourth Amendment
- The decision of the FBI to relax the legally mandated accuracy requirement for the National Crime Information Center, the nation's largest criminal justice database
- Required use of biometric identifiers for routine identification documents without associated privacy protection to assure personal information will not be misused
- Ongoing efforts by the FBI to extend the application of the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act, which requires the development of wiretap friendly communications services, to Internet telephony

EPIC concludes its announcement on a positive note, pointing out that Admiral John Poindexter's controversial Total Information Awareness project has been suspended pending a review; that CAPPs II, the airline passenger-profiling system, is under increased scrutiny; and that the United States has yet to develop a mandatory national ID—which would be a code-red development for privacy activists.

—“EPIC Announces 2003 PrivacyThreat Index,” EPIC press release

The Ritalin Generation

A study published in the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* has revealed that the number of youths in this country taking prescribed psychotropic drugs—in other words, drugs that alter behavior, emotion, or perception—increased by as much as 300 percent overall from 1987 to 1996. Youths (defined by the study as being under the age of twenty) used psychotropic drugs almost as often as adults do now. The most pronounced increases—700 percent among youths on Medicaid, and 1,400 percent among youths enrolled in HMOs—came in the use of amphetamines (mainly dextroamphetamine sulfate, which is used to treat attention deficit disorder). Antidepressants were the second most commonly prescribed medication.

More anti-anxiety medications were prescribed for young people in HMOs than for those on Medicaid, which may suggest either that more-affluent children have the luxury of being anxious or that poorer children are being undertreated.

—“Psychotropic Practice Patterns for Youth: A 10-Year Perspective,” *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, Vol. 157

Evangelicals and Prostitutes

A recent survey by the Barna Research Group—which provides “information and analysis regarding cultural trends and the Christian Church”—asked “adults who do not consider themselves to be Christian” to give their impressions of the following categories of people: born-again Christians, Democrats, evangelical Christians, lawyers, lesbians, military officers, ministers, movie and TV performers, prostitutes, real-estate agents, and Republicans. Non-Christians, it turns out, have a low regard for evangelical Christians, whom they view less favorably than all the above-mentioned groups except one: prostitutes. The survey did not, however, reveal a general anti-Christian bias among the non-Christian population: ministers and born-again Christians ranked at the top of the favorability list, below only military officers. Real-estate agents did surprisingly well, ranking just under Democrats and higher than movie and TV performers, lawyers, Republicans, and lesbians. The study concludes that prejudice against evangelicals may reflect ignorance rather than actual dislike: few of the respondents were able to identify any difference between born-again and evangelical Christians, despite their considerably less favorable view of the latter.

—“Surprisingly Few Adults Outside of Christianity Have Positive Views of Christians,” Barna Research Group

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WATERWORLD

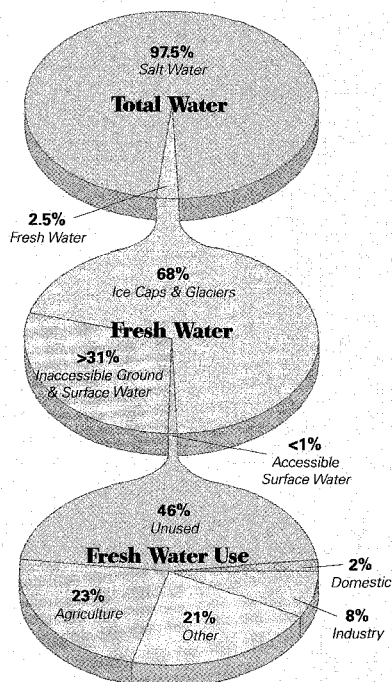
The global scarcity of water is overblown. The real problem is sanitation

Earth is awash with 35 million cubic kilometers of fresh water. That's about 1.5 billion gallons for every person alive today. The current effective supply, however, is only a small fraction of that gargantuan figure. As the pie graphs at the lower left show, 68 percent of the earth's fresh water is locked up in ice caps and glaciers, and more than 31 percent is buried deep underground. Less than one percent of all fresh water on earth is easily accessible runoff—though even that tiny sliver represents about 524,151 gallons annually for each one of us.

The world's water, however abundant, is, of course, unevenly distributed. The amount of water per capita (usually described and compared using the metric system) ranges from a high of more than 10 million cubic meters per year, in Greenland, to a low of ten cubic meters, in Kuwait. As the map indicates, forty-three countries currently fall below the internationally recog-

THE EARTH'S WATER

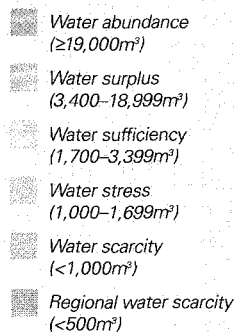
Where it is and where it goes



DECLINING U.S. WATER USE

The United States is the third largest consumer of water in the world; only India and China consume more. In the twentieth century the amount of water used here rose steadily and rapidly until about 1980, when it reached 430 billion gallons (1,900 gallons per person) a day. By 1995, despite continued economic and population growth, overall water use in the United States had declined by about 10 percent, per capita use by more than 20 percent. The drop was mostly due to increased efficiency.

YEARLY WATER SUPPLY PER CAPITA



▲ Water-stressed megacities

nized benchmark of "water sufficiency": 1,700 cubic meters per person per year. Twenty-nine of those countries experience "water scarcity," meaning a supply of less than 1,000 cubic meters per person. Many countries in North Africa and the Middle East simply do not have enough water for their citizens. Even some countries with a sufficient total water supply have pockets of regional stress, including areas with large and growing populations, like northern China.

Although the 6.3 billion people on earth today use only about 54 percent of the runoff that becomes readily available each year, those figures are expected to rise to 7.8 billion and 70 percent by 2025. This has prompted dire warnings from scientists and policymakers about an impending water shortage. But constructive steps are being taken to temper demand and expand supply—and there is room to do both. For instance, irrigation, which accounts for nearly half of all water used each year, is notoriously inefficient; in some developing coun-

tries only 38 percent of the water put to agricultural use actually helps crops grow. Even a proven but not widespread improvement such as drip irrigation could drastically increase efficiency, thereby lowering demand. On the supply side, building more dams and reservoirs could expand the percentage of runoff that is "caught" for human use; current systems catch only 12,500 of the 40,000 cubic kilometers of runoff available each year. And we haven't really begun to tap the enormous supply of harder-to-reach deep groundwater. Today we use only

THE TROUBLED NILE

Many rivers in the world are being depleted and fouled by overuse, particularly for irrigation. The Nile is a prime example. More than 90 percent of its natural flow is drawn off by farmers or industry, or evaporates from the surface of reservoirs. Only a small portion of the river ends up flowing into the Mediterranean—and the portion that does is heavily polluted by fertilizers and industrial waste. (The same is true of the Colorado River, in the United States: irrigation, canals, and evaporation draw off so much of the Colorado that only a small and polluted amount, if any, reaches the Gulf of California.)

MOVING "RIVERS" IN CHINA

In an effort to bring water to drought-prone northern China, the Chinese government is digging three giant canals to carry water from the Yangtze—the world's third largest river. The canals will each stretch more than 700 miles and will eventually carry 12.7 trillion gallons of water—enough to supply New York City with water for more than a quarter century—each year.

WATER PROBLEMS

- Insufficient drinking water (>50% of population without safe drinking water)
- Insufficient sanitation (>50% of population without modern sanitation)

THE DESALINATION OPTION

Taking the salt out of salt water is expensive. Desalinated sea water costs \$2.50 to \$16 per 1,000 gallons (versus \$.50 to \$2.00 for the same amount of conventionally treated water in the United States). Only the oil-rich countries of the arid Middle East rely on desalination for a substantial portion of the water they consume. Kuwait (which gets 51 percent of its water through desalination), the United Arab Emirates (16 percent), and Saudi Arabia (four percent) lead the list. The United States desalinates about 332 million cubic meters annually—less than one percent of the water it uses.

600–700 cubic kilometers of easily accessible groundwater annually, whereas estimates put the amount of total groundwater in the earth at something on the order of 10 million cubic kilometers.

The fact is, dirty water presents a much greater and more intractable problem than water scarcity. About two fifths of the world's population lacks access to modern sanitation. Unsurprisingly, sanitation problems display a distinct geography: rural people suffer more than urban (approximately 80 percent of those who lack access to sanitation live in rural areas), and poor countries suffer more than wealthy ones. In India and China

together more than 1.5 billion people live in areas without sanitation facilities.

One of the world's leading pollutants is human and animal excrement. Many countries dump raw sewage into their water supplies; poor, predominantly rural nations are often unable to clean this fouled water before people use it for bathing, cooking, or drinking. Afghanistan is worst off: 87 percent of its population lacks access to clean water. A number of African countries—including Ethiopia (76 percent), Chad (73 percent), and Sierra Leone (72 percent)—are not far behind.

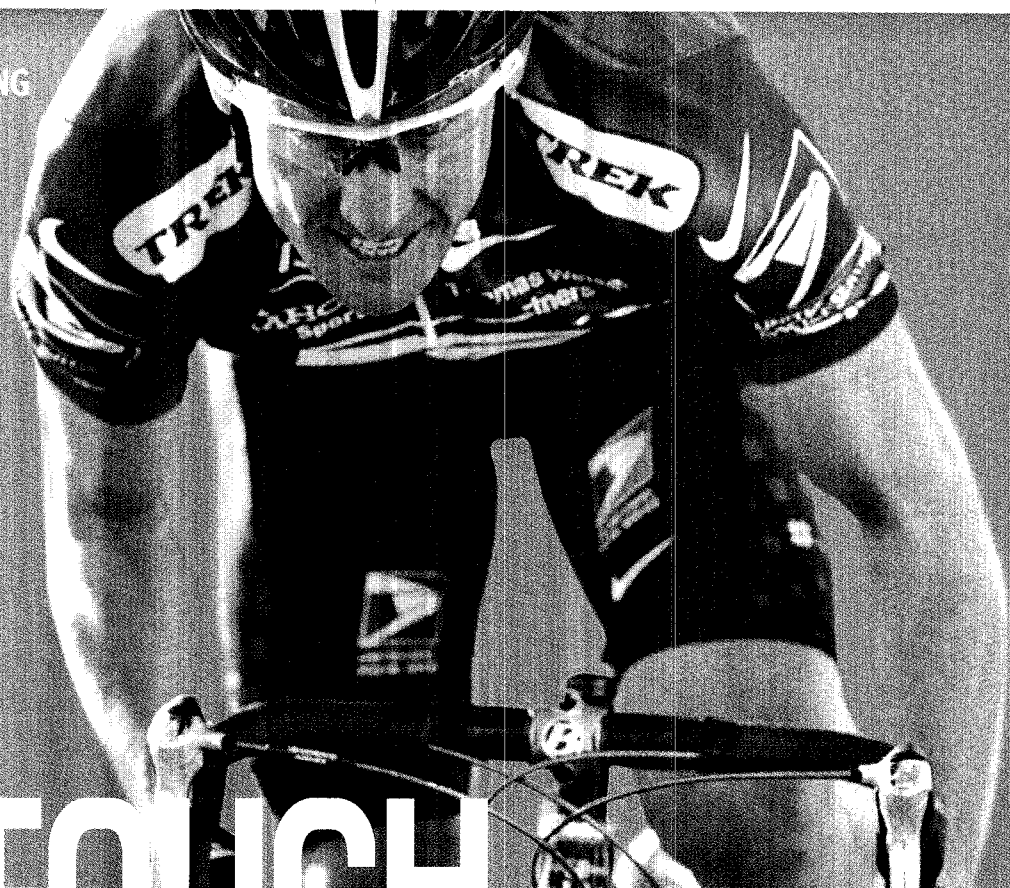
Dirty drinking water causes widespread illness. More than two million

people die each year from waterborne diseases, which are almost entirely preventable. The great majority of these deaths come in developing nations, among children under the age of five.

Cleaning dirty water and preventing its myriad consequences is not easy. Sewers to remove fouled water, treatment plants to clean it, and hospitals to treat those sickened by waterborne illness are expensive. And African and South Asian countries, which suffer the most from dirty water, are generally the least able to build a clean-water infrastructure. These nations don't have a shortage of water; they have a shortage of money.

—JEN JOYNT AND MARSHALL POE

LANCE ARMSTRONG



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THE BEAR SLAYER

During his quarter century of dictatorial rule Nicolae Ceaușescu treated the brown bears of Romania almost as badly as he treated the people. Only his gamekeepers saw the grisly reality

BY DAVID QUAMMEN

.....

In the mountains of eastern Romania, along a scary two-lane highway winding north toward the city of Brașov, sits an institution called Muzeul Cinegetic al Carpatilor. Loosely translated: the Carpathian Hunting Museum. It's no magnet for international tourists, and you won't find it mentioned in even the better guidebooks. Its holdings, and the style of their presentation, are neither so varied nor so informative as what you'd see in a good museum of natural history. Reduced to essentials, apart from context, it's little more than a warehouse of skulls and pelts. But for anyone interested in landscape and memory, in the complicated relations between human beings and other dangerous beasts, in Romanian history, and in the life and death of that country's most infamous autocrat, this place merits a visit.

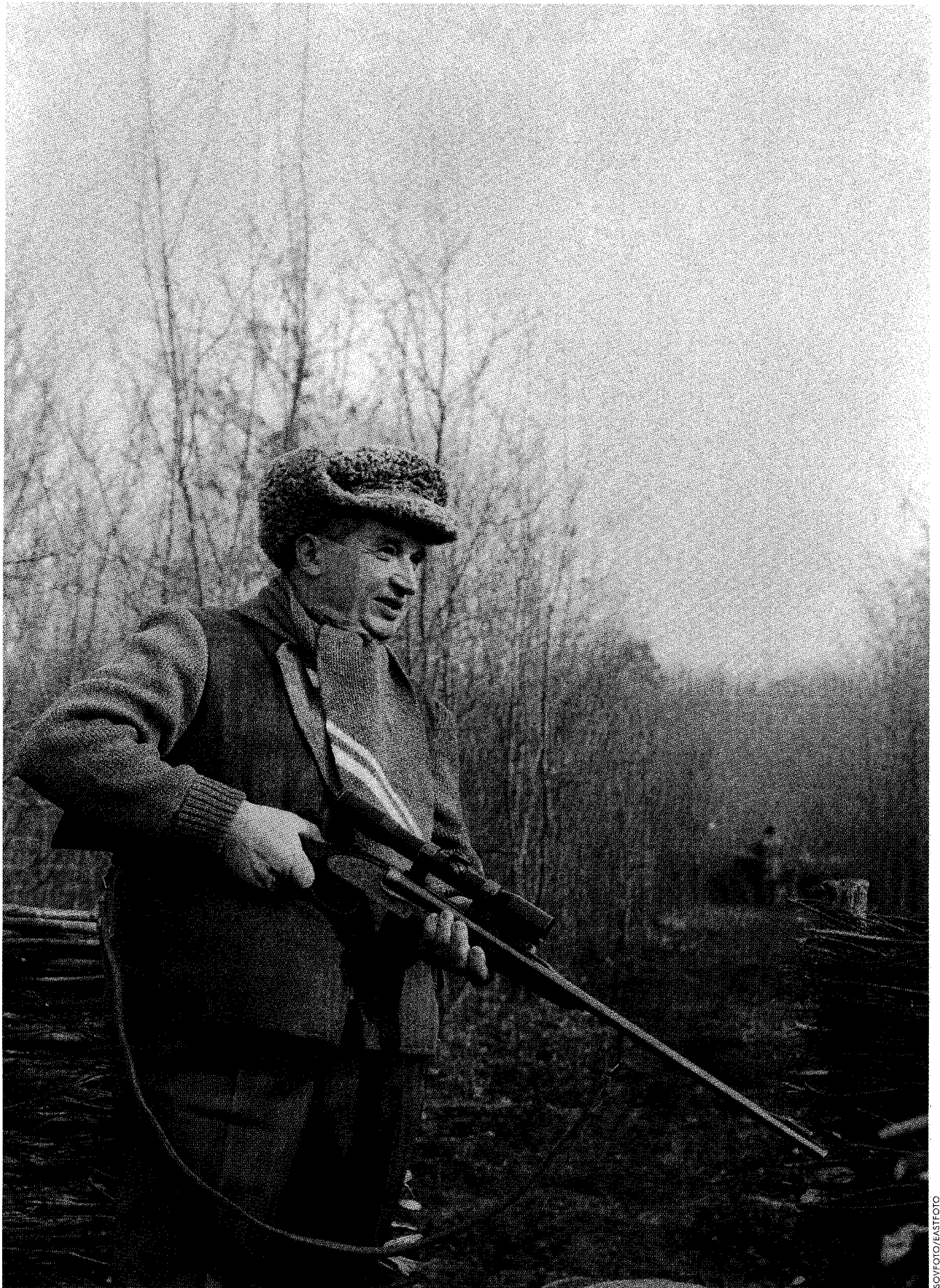
The nearest town is Posada, itself too small to appear on national maps. From an industrial city called Ploiești, in the lowlands just north of Bucharest, you'll snake and climb along the Prahova River toward its source. The highway is a gantlet of soot-farting trucks, lane closures for repair, horse carts looming unexpectedly, and impatient drivers who pass blindly on switchback turns, as though the possibility of a head-on crash were an abstraction that they've never troubled to consider. In other words, it's an average Romanian road. If you attend to your driving as carefully as you should, you might easily miss the museum's sign. Stay alert, plunge out of the traffic flow into curbside parking, and sigh with relief when you're there.

Cinegetic is an important term in Romania, especially among those charged with managing wildlife. *Vânătoare* is the straightforward word for hunting, whereas *cinegetic* (possibly derived from the French adjective *cynégétique*) carries high-flown scientific nuances, suggesting the use of hunting as a tool in a sophisticated program of game management. The national traditions and protocols associated with hunting are ancient, deeply embraced, and peculiarly European, though the European patterns have their still more peculiar Romanian variants. The Romanian Forest Department (Regia Națională a Pădurilor) prides itself on a

high degree of cinegetic expertise. And the woods are full of creatures considered game: boar, red deer, roe deer, lynx, wolves, and an extraordinary number of bears. The native bear species is *Ursus arctos*, conspecific with the grizzlies of North America and the brown bears of Scandinavia and northern Asia. It's known here informally as *ursul brun*. For a combination of reasons, some ecological, some historical, Romania harbors a far larger population of brown bears than any other European country west of Russia. That unusual abundance is reflected at Muzeul Cinegetic.

The museum is a boxy steel-and-glass building that looks out of place on the grounds of the old mountain estate of the Bibescos, a princely family prominent during the late phase of the Romanian monarchy, which ended amid the upheavals following World War II. One section of the museum features ornate hunting gear and opulent rustic decor from that milieu, including tapestries, antique firearms, signal horns, powder horns, a pearl-handled sword, a set of hunting knives with deer-foot handles, a silver jewel box in the shape of an ostrich, and a bronze sculpture of Saint George killing his dragon, which in this rendering closely resembles the living "dragons" of the island of Komodo. The rest of the museum is filled with mounted heads, skulls, stuffed animals, antlers, horns, boar tusks, and big furs spread-eagled on the walls.

The stolid silence of the trophies, and the dearth of explanatory legends in Romanian or any other language, are offset on the day of my visit by a young woman in a cream-colored sweater and scarf who, presiding as guide, pours forth commentary in singsong schoolroom English. Although her outfit seems casual, her manner is official. The museum was created in 1996, she says. This is a black goat, she says, gesturing at a chamois. And these Carpathian stags—she motions toward a wall festooned with forty-some skull-and-rack mounts of red deer—all of them, they rated gold medals. To earn a gold medal, she explains, requires more than 220 CIC points. (CIC is the acronym for Conseil International de la Chasse et de la Conservation du Gibier, a European body, roughly equivalent to the Boone and



SOVPHOTO/EASTPHOTO

Crockett Club in North America, that maintains a record book on trophy animals. Its point system, based on a series of measurements and judgments applicable to skulls and skins, is the means by which competitive hunters keep score.) Here's a stag that received 261.25 points, the young woman says, a world record when it was killed, in 1980. We step past a lynx pelt on the floor. We admire an array of fallow-deer antlers. We move from the mouflon (*Ovis orientalis*, an exotic bighorn sheep) to the dainty roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) to the stocky and pugnacious wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), this last represented in various forms: a head, a full body, three pelts on the wall, and two dozen sets of tusks mounted on wooden plaques. A large boar, the young woman says, can attain 250 kilograms (550 pounds). Most of the record-book animals here, she adds in a tone of ambivalent pride, were shot by Nicolae Ceaușescu.

She doesn't need to tell me who he was. And yet Ceaușescu's name is conspicuously absent from this national shrine of blood-sport mementos. CIC scores are posted beside many of the trophies, but no information as to who killed what. That comes only verbally, from the woman in the sweater-and-scarf uniform. Yes, Ceaușescu. Yes, Ceaușescu again. This one, too, Ceaușescu. And we have many more Ceaușescu trophies in storage, she brags—or (it's hard to tell quite which) admits. I keep hearing his name; I can almost feel his presence, despite the absence of photos, commentary, or any other sort of attribution. Ceaușescu—he's everywhere and he's nowhere. It's a post-Communist museum filled with discomfiting evidence of, on the one hand, the country's wildlife treasures and, on the other hand, the extent to which those treasures were pilaged for decades during the Communist era by one pernicious pipsqueak who fancied himself a great hunter. No wonder the young woman sounds conflicted. The whole place is uneasily balanced between remembering and forgetting.

Nicolae Ceaușescu ruled Romania for twenty-five years, with ever-increasing harshness and megalomania, eventually treating it as his personal kingdom. Like some other such tyrants, he was an inherently uninteresting man whose life story ascended to drama only by way of woeful consequentiality and evil. He came from humble origins (the son of a drunken farmer, he was a shoemaker's apprentice in Bucharest at age eleven), showed no early promise or flair, and made his political contacts in prison, during the years when Communists were persecuted as criminal agitators. He managed eventually to get hold of power and then—a deft manipulator of people and situations—he gradually tightened his grip. One of his former minions, a

director of foreign intelligence who defected to the West, described him to a reporter as a man of “native intelligence, phenomenal memory, and iron will,” although other portraits are less flattering.

During his early years as chief of state, Ceaușescu seemed progressive, at least in comparison with most Communist bosses of the time. He was always more nationalist than Marxist, a Romanian leader in the homegrown style that unites a whole rogues' gallery of fascists, Christian vanguardists, and anti-Semites. He distanced himself from the Soviet Union, reduced his participation in the Warsaw Pact, and criticized the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, in 1968. Moves like that made him, for a while, the favorite Commie potentate among the Western democracies. Richard Nixon came calling in 1969, in his first visit as President to any Communist state, and posed with his arm thrown cordially over Ceaușescu's shoulder. In 1978 George McGovern rated Ceaușescu “among the world's leading proponents of arms control.” In 1983 Vice President George Bush called Ceaușescu “one of Europe's good Communists,” though by that time the Romanian's brutal side was manifest. He was never a democrat.

Ceaușescu discovered a zeal for hunting—or, more accurately, for the sort of travesty of hunting that only a despot can experience and only a delusional egotist would enjoy.

From its hopeful beginning to its grim end Ceaușescu's regime became increasingly more personal, more ruinous, more desperate, and more vicious. As early as 1966 Ceaușescu, craving a larger national work force, not only prohibited contra-

ception but also banned abortion for any woman under forty with fewer than four children, and he undertook to enforce that rule through compulsory monthly medical examinations. With illegal abortion the only available form of birth control, Romania's death rate from abortions became the highest in Europe. The infant-mortality rate was high also—so high that a birth wasn't recorded until the child had survived into its fourth week. These policies also produced an appalling number of orphans, who were consigned to grim state institutions. In the 1970s, dissatisfied with Romania's role as a breadbasket for the Eastern bloc, he put the country on a crash program of industrialization, the main results of which were heavy-equipment factories building inferior trucks and tractors; petrochemical factories dependent on imported oil; forced urbanization; polluted air and rivers; and the squandering of a huge sum in foreign loans. The products rolling out of the factories were generally too shabby for profitable export. Collectivized farms were set up, though many small farmers in the mountains managed to preserve their independence. Another program, called *sistematizare* (“systematization”), entailed the willful destruction of villages to force people into towns, and the razing of old neighborhoods in towns and cities to replace them with high-rise concrete

apartment blocks. Once peasants had been transformed into industrial laborers and packed into state-controlled urban hives, they were at the mercy of the government in ways they hadn't been while living on the land. For instance, their heat or electricity could be cut off. Their habits, even their thoughts, could more easily be monitored. All these stern measures, along with Ceaușescu's hold on power itself, were supported by a large state-security agency—the *Departamentul Securității Statului*, known colloquially as the *Securitate*—and its vast network of paid or coerced informants.

Then, during the 1980s, while systematization and other costly programs were grinding along, Ceaușescu became obsessively determined, as a point of pride and independence, to pay off the foreign debts. He succeeded in doing that—by rerouting the modest consumer economy into exports and bleeding his own people pale. Food went abroad while Romanians suffered rationing and hunger. Energy went abroad while Romanians in chilly apartments lived by the light of forty-watt bulbs. Gasoline grew scarce, and horse carts, which had always been part of the rural scene, became vehicles of national purpose. The country's single television channel carried hour after hour of fulsome attention to Ceaușescu, his wife, Elena (a harpy who served as his chief adviser and full partner in bad governance), and their supposed achievements. But in the cool blue glare on the other side of the TV screens people hated as well as feared the reigning couple. When the wave of revolutions broke across Eastern Europe, in 1989, Nicolae Ceaușescu achieved distinction as the sole Communist leader who was not only deposed but, along with his wife, promptly executed.

That occurred on December 25, 1989, at an army barracks in the city of *Tîrgoviște*, to which the couple had been taken after an attempted escape from Bucharest by helicopter went awry. The fatal loss of Ceaușescu's political grip had occurred abruptly just four days earlier, during a speech to a mass gathering in Bucharest. Such gatherings had been, for so many years, marked by docility born of oppression, but this one all at once became weirdly rebellious. To their own surprise and everyone else's, the Ceaușescus were on the run. Then they were caught. They remained under guard at *Tîrgoviște* for a few days while dangerous decisions were pondered in the capital by a hastily formed junta, the National Salvation Front. Then came a kangaroo court, lasting fifty-five minutes and recorded on videotape, during which Ceaușescu irascibly denied the legitimacy of the men from the junta (including some of his prominent underlings, now turncoats) who had come out to conduct this pro forma tribunal and then kill him. Power relations in Romania had changed suddenly, and the change wasn't precisely a triumph of good over evil. The army had lost patience with Ceaușescu and thrown its fealty to the people. The most adroit of the Communist apparatchiks were now quickly and opportunistically reinventing themselves as populists. To advance their goals, and to guarantee their safety against

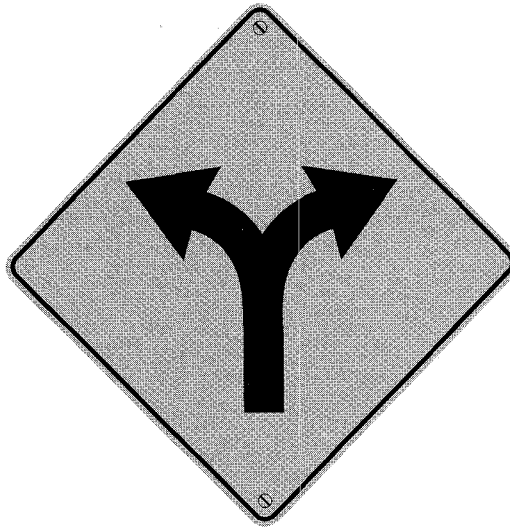
the possibility of a restoration, Ceaușescu had to go—not just out of command but all the way down. Then again, it could hardly have happened to a worthier fellow.

After five minutes of what passed for deliberation, the death sentence was read and the couple were led outside. Ceaușescu, possibly still assuming that he would be helicoptered back to Bucharest, began humming the “Internationale.” Instead of a helicopter he saw a blank wall and four soldiers with rifles. “Stop it, Nicu,” Elena snapped. “Look, they’re going to shoot us like dogs.” A moment later she spoke what may have been her last words: “I can’t believe this. Is the death penalty still in force in Romania?” For them it was. The backstop wall later showed scars from more than a hundred bullets.

During his heyday Ceaușescu had styled himself the *Conducător*, a highly resonant Romanian word suggesting “supreme leader, boss, master,” which linked him with an earlier *conducător*: the military strongman Marshal Ion Antonescu, who led the country during World War II and was Hitler's accomplice in the Holocaust. After 1989 Ceaușescu was snidely remembered by some citizens under a different nickname: “*Impușcatul*,” meaning “the Shot One.”

But the heyday lasted many years, as reflected here in *Muzeul Cinegetic*, with all its skinned and stuffed witnesses vouching for the Shot One as Romania's pre-eminent and most privileged shooter. Passing beyond the boars, the museum guide leads onward, and I follow her into an innermost chamber, appointed to serve as the resplendent culmination of a visitor's experience. She calls it the Carnivore Animal Room. There's a wildcat mounted in a tree, and below it three wolves chorusing their voiceless howls. Elsewhere around the room, in poses intended to seem lifelike, are a dozen bears, mostly cubs and yearlings. Another dozen, in the form of pelts with heads and claws attached, adorn the walls. Alone on the west wall is the centerpiece of the collection: a vast bearskin, like the largest flying squirrel ever imagined. Its great head hangs downward, nose to the floor. Its front claws are almost three inches long. Its fur is umber, with blond highlights across the shoulder hump and the forelegs beautifully catching the afternoon light. The mount is backed with green felt and punctuated by four florets of green bunting, one at each hip and shoulder, as though the bear were adorned to march in a Saint Patrick's Day parade. Beside it is a laconic plate reporting only the CIC score: 640.46. This trophy—so the young woman claims, anyway—is the biggest bearskin in the world. The animal that wore it was shot by Nicolae Ceaușescu.

Whether she's correct about its surpassing size (was it really larger than any grizzly from our Lower Forty-eight, any Alaskan brown bear, any Kodiak from Kodiak Island?) is an issue I don't have the heart to dispute with her. Without question it was a gigantic individual. Yes, she adds—650 kilograms (1,400 pounds) when killed. That was in 1984, in the



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Mureș district, on the western slope of the Carpathians. It was recognized as a world-record trophy a year later, when the CIC met in Leipzig. The size of the skin, the density of the hair, the coloration—all these contributed to its high score.

Then the woman shifts her tone from vaunting to confessional, as abruptly as those underlings shifted in December of 1989. “This bear, I must tell you sincerely,” she says, “was artificially feeded for Ceaușescu to kill.” I haven’t badgered her. Apparently it’s just something she needed to say. Carrying that piece of information as a lead worth exploring, I make my way out past Saint George and the Komodo into daylight.

The Carpathian Mountains form a large L-shaped divide across central Romania, with the letter turned backwards, its open side facing west, toward Hungary and Serbia, its vertical stem arcing northward, into Ukraine. The crest of the Carpathians within Romania itself serves as a boundary between the country’s western province, Transylvania, and the provinces of Moldavia to the east and Wallachia to the south and southeast. The east-west stem, the base of the L, is sometimes called the Transylvanian Alps. Both stems of the range are steep, serious mountains that have helped to delineate and enforce political divisions in the region for centuries. It seems improbable that a single country could have coalesced with the Carpathian partition as its internal frame. Then again, much about Romania is improbable.

The lowlands are flat, fertile plains, draining gently south to the Danube or (in Moldavia) east to the Prut River. Those plains support most of the country’s human population and are largely settled, dissected, ploughed, and committed to old-fashioned, almost medieval agriculture. The mountains are still covered with hardwood forests of oak and beech, giving way at higher elevations to spruce and fir and, above that, rocky spires. The hardwood forests, with their mast crops of acorn and beechnut, their mushrooms and berries, their abundance of roe deer and other ungulates representing potential prey, are excellent habitat for brown bears.

Records suggest that in 1940 the country harbored about a thousand bears. By 1950, after the disruptions of war and the austerities of the early postwar years, during which poaching went mostly unpoliced, the number had fallen to around 860. Given the circumstances, such population estimates shouldn’t be taken as precise, but the general size and the slight downward trend are plausible. In coming years both the size and the precision of the numbers would increase.

Although *Homo sapiens* and *Ursus arctos* had coexisted for thousands of years in the Carpathians, interacting

enough to acquire some degree of mutual wariness, hunting for bears wasn’t widespread. Most hunters were peasants, and most peasants were more interested in game animals that delivered better meat for less risk, such as red deer, roe deer, and wild boar. Under a hunting law promulgated in 1891, the bear was considered a pest, subject to extermination without license or limit. The royal family did some bear hunting, and probably lesser aristocrats did also, no doubt in a spirit of noblesse oblige as well as rustic adventure, but to the people who made their living in the mountains—the poor sidehill farmers, the shepherds, the woodcutters—bears seem to have been more a menacing nuisance than a desirable form of game. During the 1920s, according to one authority, “the bear was considered a bad and very dangerous animal, and all the bears that were found were shot.”

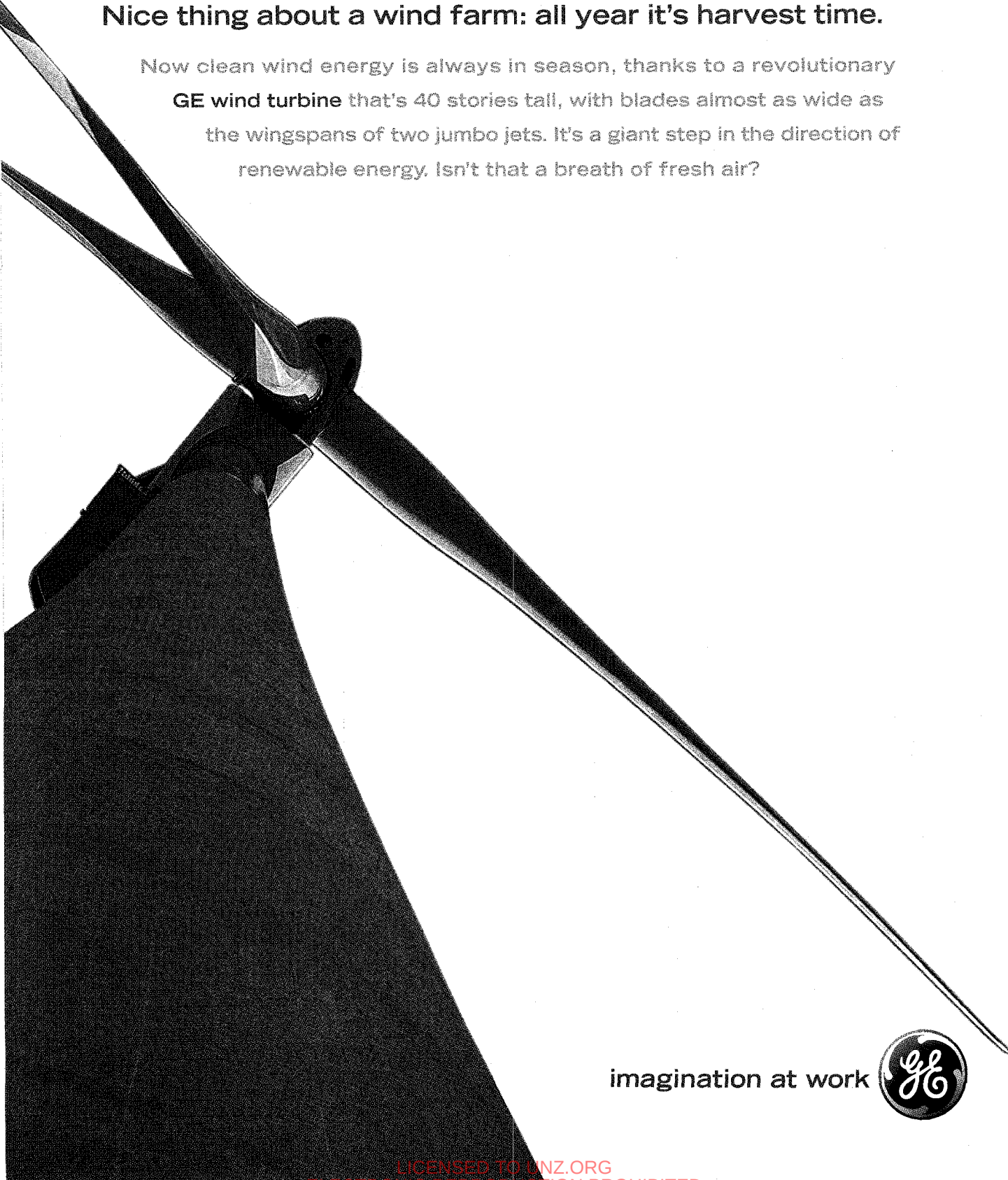
In 1927 some restrictions were introduced—against shooting bears without a license, against shooting sows with cubs, against killing bears in their dens. Implicit in these restrictions were two premises: first, that bear hunting was a form of sport, to be governed by orderly and ethical principles; second, that the bear population was a valuable and finite resource. Recognizing that value and that finitude was

not the same as requiring that bears be managed sustainably, but it was a step. What proved helpful for Romania’s bear population was not so much the lofty ideals of sustainable management as the realities of Communist autocracy. After World War II things were different in the

The gamekeeper’s role, vis-à-vis his resident bears, combines the services and attitudes of a nanny, a zoo attendant, a field naturalist, a sniper’s spotter, and a pimp.

mountains. Common people had no guns. Common people were afraid of the central government, its regulations, and its means of enforcement. Bear hunting became a prestigious privilege reserved mainly to the nomenklatura—the Party elite.

The last Romanian king was forced to abdicate in 1947, after which the country became a people’s republic. For a handful of years, while consolidating its power, the Communist regime endured an internal struggle between two factions, one of which had spent time in Moscow, the other in Romanian prisons. Eventually the prison-annealed group (including Nicolae Ceaușescu, then a minor functionary) succeeded in overpowering and purging the others. In 1952 a former railway-workers organizer named Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, who led the prison faction (although he was more Stalinist in style and ideology than even most of the Moscow group), emerged as Premier of the country and secretary-general of the Party. By that time, according to records from Romania’s Forest Research and Management Institute (a branch of the Forest Department known by its Romanian acronym, ICAS), the bear population had grown to 1,500. In 1953 *Ursus arctos* became a protected species—which was to say, managed carefully for hunting.



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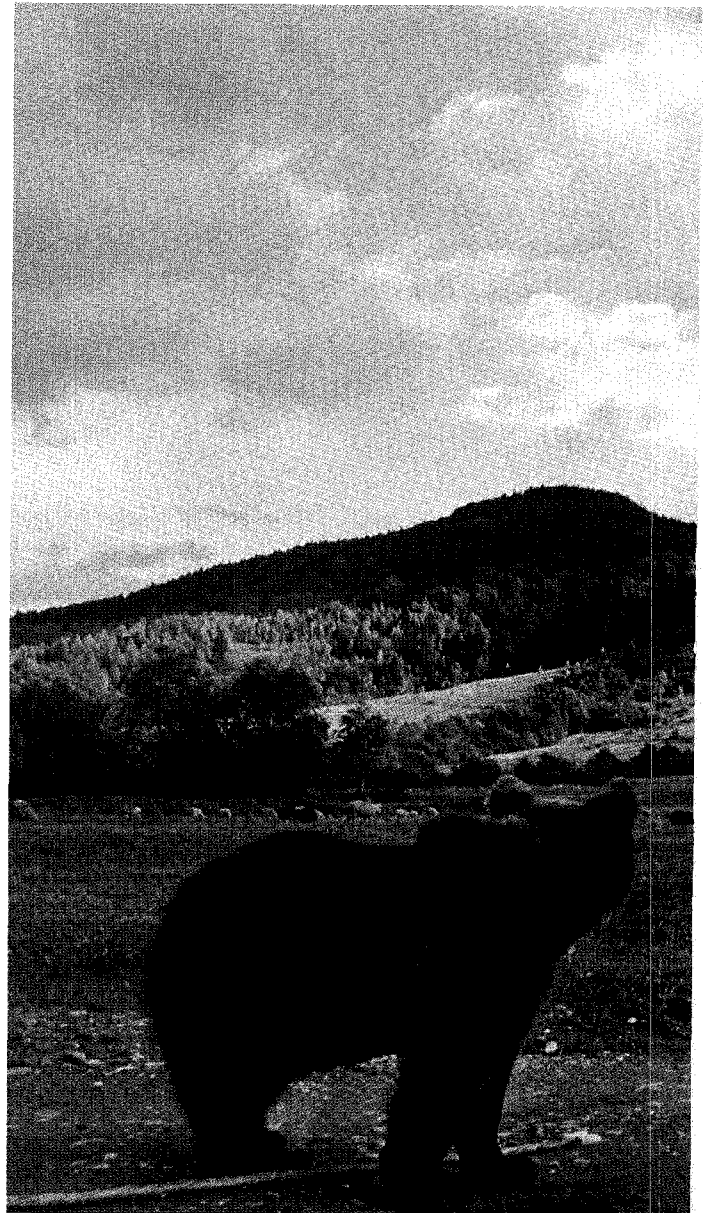
imagination at work



Two years later the bear population reached 2,400, a brisk increase that reflected the good habitat, the natural rebound of a depleted population, and the new regime of protective sanctions. The numbers continued rising—to 3,300 bears in 1960, and 4,014 in 1965, the year Gheorghiu-Dej died and was succeeded by Ceaușescu. The history books don't say whether Gheorghiu-Dej, an urban agitator in the proletarian vein, fancied bear hunting personally, although there is a record of his having hosted Nikita Khrushchev at a hard-drinking bear-killing junket up in the Harghita district. Ceaușescu, similarly, had shown no interest in woodland shooting sports during his earlier years. But in the late 1960s, while he solidified his position as supreme leader of both the Party and the country, he discovered a zeal for hunting—or, more accurately, for the sort of travesty of hunting that only a despot can experience and only a delusional egotist would enjoy.

To understand Ceaușescu's relationship with bears, it's necessary to consider a few facts about the bureaucratic arrangements that govern *Ursus arctos* in Romania. Within the country's forty-one administrative districts (*județi*, roughly equivalent to counties) are 2,226 game-management units, known as *fonduri de vânatoare*, or hunting areas. Many of those areas are in the Carpathians, and more than 400 of them contain bears. The average size of one hunting area is about thirty-nine square miles—small enough that a vigorous person could walk its perimeter in a day. To each area is assigned a professional gamekeeper, a hardy fieldman who comes to know its terrain and its animals well. Some of the hunting areas, notably in the lowlands, support only pheasant, roe deer, waterfowl, and other small game. If the area contains bear habitat, as the best of the mountainous areas do, an important part of the gamekeeper's job is to nurture the resident bears and familiarize himself with them as individuals. How does he nurture them? By putting out supplemental food—apples and pears and plums by the bushel, corncobs by the cartload, pellets of a specially blended bear chow, and occasionally the carcass of an old horse. Spring, summer, and fall, the gamekeeper and his helpers deliver vast quantities of such stuff for the delectation of their bears, serving it at feeding stations sited strategically throughout the forest. A typical station includes a feeding trough (just like one in a barnyard, except here bear scat lies among the old corncobs strewn around it) and a tall iron frame for hanging large pieces of meat. How does the gamekeeper familiarize himself with the local bears? By walking the forest, studying their sign, spending long days and nights observing them at the feeding stations.

Another feature of the typical station is an elevated blind within eyeshot of the trough, from which the gamekeeper does his observing. In some cases this is a simple platform of planks about ten feet off the ground, like a child's tree house though not quite so graceful; in others it's an enclosed structure on sturdy pilings. If the blind is also used as a shooting



position, it's known as a high seat. A high seat may be spartan or comfortable; at the comfortable extreme it's essentially a two-room cabin, furnished with cots, a wood stove, a window overlooking the target area (about fifty yards away), a firewood bin, a toilet, and maybe a bottle or two of vodka. Under such circumstances a bear hunter is not put to great inconvenience or challenge, let alone risk. Although a recent change in regulations prohibits shooting bears from such enclosed high seats, the prohibition may not always be enforced. In any case, the real work of understanding the quarry has already been done by the gamekeeper, and the necessity of stalking is obviated by baiting the bears to the trough.

Gamekeepers of the old school, diligent and devoted, keep their bear-watching data in notebook diaries. They give the bears names and record their activities, minute by minute, like a field biologist studying animal behavior. From such a diary the gamekeeper can report months or years later, say, that a certain mature sow came to the feed-

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ing station at dusk on October 4, and was driven away an hour later by a certain ill-tempered male; or that a younger female arrived at midnight the same evening, with only one of her cubs—where was the other? A further responsibility of the gamekeeper is to estimate in advance the trophy quality in CIC points of each bear. That task is sometimes aided by hoisting part of a horse carcass on the iron frame, so that a bear will stand erect and reach for the meat, showing its full size against calibrations on the frame. The gamekeeper's role, vis-à-vis his resident bears, combines the services and attitudes of a nanny, a zoo attendant, a field naturalist, a sniper's spotter, and a pimp. To call it an ambivalent relationship would be understatement.

On a mild summer evening I visit one of these gamekeepers at his home in the mountains, near the Transylvania-Wallachia border. His name is Ion Moșu, and his position is *maistru de vânătoare*, "master of hunting," for an area of some fifty square miles. He's a slender, youngish man with hazel

eyes and a stubble beard, wearing an olive uniform shirt, a jaunty warm-up jacket, and an olive fedora. Having just returned from hoeing potatoes, he invites me into his house but then suggests that we'll have a pleasanter ambience in the twilight. Settled outside on plastic chairs, we talk for two hours about bear management and bear behavior while his wife and his mother-in-law silently bring us coffee and sliced cake.

His area at present contains twenty-five bears, Moșu tells me, a number that includes the year's cubs. He feeds each of them five kilos of special pellets a day during hunting season, and in summer (when wild foods are more easily available) somewhat less. Occasionally he also treats them to a horse carcass from an abattoir, or to a load of rotten apples. In autumn and spring he concentrates this bait at the three high seats within his area. Several other feeding stations, at which no one is permitted to hunt, are more remotely sited in the forest. Those he uses in summer, placing food there to entice his bears away from mountain

meadows where they might otherwise make trouble—and find it—among shepherds' flocks.

Moșu can recognize each of his bears by its fur color, its footprints, and its behavior. And the bears recognize him in return—by his smell. They're accustomed to him, Moșu tells me. They trust him. They remain calm in his presence but grow consternated when they catch the stink of a stranger. Sometimes he toys with a bear, sidling close, closer, seeing how near he can get before the animal demands a little more distance. Moșu himself is always listening, watching, perceiving smells. He's attuned to the dynamics of the forest, to the interplay of creature with creature, to the balances and the disruptions, in a way that his Forest Department bosses are not. He's a fieldman—minimal education, lots of experience. He can sense the presence of a bear in the way birds behave. He knows how a bear reacts to the sight of a human being. A wolf reacts differently. A fox or a lynx differently. Ever since he was a small boy, Moșu says, as though this were an explanation, hunting was his passion.

When I ask about his current crop of bears, he dashes for the house, returning proudly with a small notebook. It's his field diary, page after page of dates, times, behavioral notes on animals that he knows by the names he has given them. Fricosu ("the Shy One") is a big fellow, worth about 430 CIC points as of April. Furiosu ("the Angry One") is a beast with an attitude. Frumosu ("the Beautiful One") was shot by a hunter two months ago, earning the department a good fee. Yes, of course he was present for that hunt, Moșu says. The gamekeeper must always be present, in case the animal is only wounded (he'll track it and kill it) or something else goes wrong.

Does it ever make him sad, I ask, to see one of his bears shot? Waiting for my interpreter to work, I don't really expect this question to engage Moșu. Sadness over a dead bear? Probably that's an alien and irrelevant vein of sentiment. But I'm wrong. "Sure it makes me sad," he says. "I play with them. I *know* them." It's a job, never easy, not always agreeable, raising bears for other people to kill. But he's a professional.

As for himself, Moșu no longer cares to hunt. He'd rather watch animals, he has discovered, than shoot them.

The close attention of gamekeepers like Ion Moșu to their respective hunting areas is what allows the Romanian Forest Department to offer precise (and maybe even accurate) annual counts of the total bear population. Biologists at ICAS, the forest research institute, do the arithmetic based on numbers that come in from the fieldmen. A glance at the tables and maps prepared by ICAS shows which districts are richest in bears—Harghita, Bistrița, Argeș, and Covasna, among others—and which hunting areas within a given district are particular hot spots. Of course, Nicolae Ceaușescu didn't need to consult tables and maps, not personally, because he had toadying bureaucrats whispering in his ears.

Beginning in the late 1960s Ceaușescu made himself the hunter in chief of Romanian forests as well as the commander in chief of the military. He arrogated hundreds of hunting areas—all the best of them, as far as large game was concerned—to his personal use. Forest managers at the district level, and the hunting wardens who worked for them, and the gamekeepers who reported to the wardens, came to realize that any estimable animal emerging within their purview was an animal the Conducător might want to kill. They recognized that pandering to his bloodlust, to his lazy greed for trophies, was good professional politics. One district competed against another for his visits, offering big bears and rack-heavy stags as easy targets for his expensive imported rifles. For a typical hunt Ceaușescu would fly in by helicopter, landing on a pad cleared within the hunting area. From there he'd be taken by rough-terrain vehicle (in earlier years he favored Jeeps; later a Russian make, the Gaz; and still later a rattletrap Romanian imitation, the Aro) along forest roads to a point very near the spot where hungry bears or rutting red deer were expected to appear. He would walk the short distance to a strategically placed high seat—in a tight little draw that served as a game corridor, for example, or along a stream, where the gurgling water would cover noises made by a hunter. Usually he was accompanied by at least one security officer, who would carry his weapons and ammunition, and a forestry official from the district office. Many other Forest Department employees would have been involved in preparing for his visit, but they were kept at a distance during the actual hunt. In the high seat Ceaușescu had little patience for waiting and watching. His attention span, according to a witness who worked with him often, was five minutes. But for this brand of hunting, patience wasn't necessary. Bears came to the feeding troughs. Red-deer stags congregated in response to hormonal imperatives and the attraction of hinds. In some cases both bears and wild boar were pushed toward a high seat in organized drives involving dozens of beaters. Ceaușescu took his shots, admired his kills, posed for photographs, and then departed.

The report of his short attention span comes from Vasile Crișan, a forestry official who later published a memoir, in German, the title of which translates as *Ceaușescu: Hunter or Butcher?* The gist of the book is that Crișan's boss was indeed a *schlächter* ("butcher"), not a true *jäger* ("hunter"). For instance, Ceaușescu would continue firing wildly at an animal until it collapsed or ran away. If he wounded a stag, he'd command Crișan and other attendants to find it and bring him the trophy. If he missed altogether, they would tell him the stag was wounded and that they'd find it; then that stag or a similar one would be killed and delivered. "Sometimes more stags were 'found' than were shot," Crișan wrote. "Once, after a hunt, a party secretary called him the next day and told him that all the six stags were found. 'The hell,' Ceaușescu said, 'how can you find six stags, if I only shot four?'"

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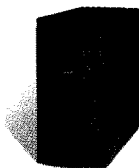
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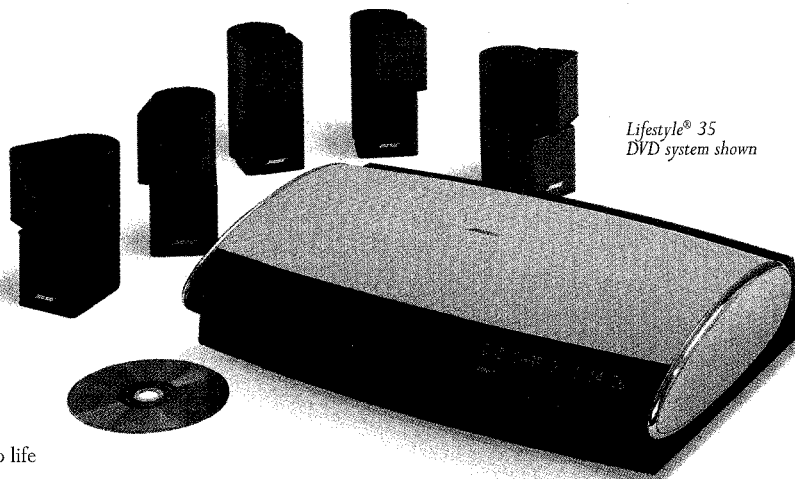
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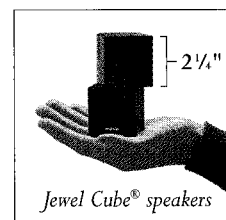


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to augment the size, and therefore the CIC scores, of Ceaușescu's bearskins. Once cleaned of meat and fat, a pelt was nailed onto a specially designed table with movable panels that could be spread outward, like a medieval rack. Treated with certain oils to prevent tearing, the skin was thus stretched "to the limit of its resistance." Taxidermists who showed their adeptness at such stretching became Ceaușescu favorites. "It was an honor for them, but not for us, the forestry staff," Crișan wrote. "Many pelts were totally deformed through this method. Every expert could tell that these were not the natural proportions of a bear, and this was awkward for us." Furthermore, the bearskins didn't need such abuse, "as they were already big enough."

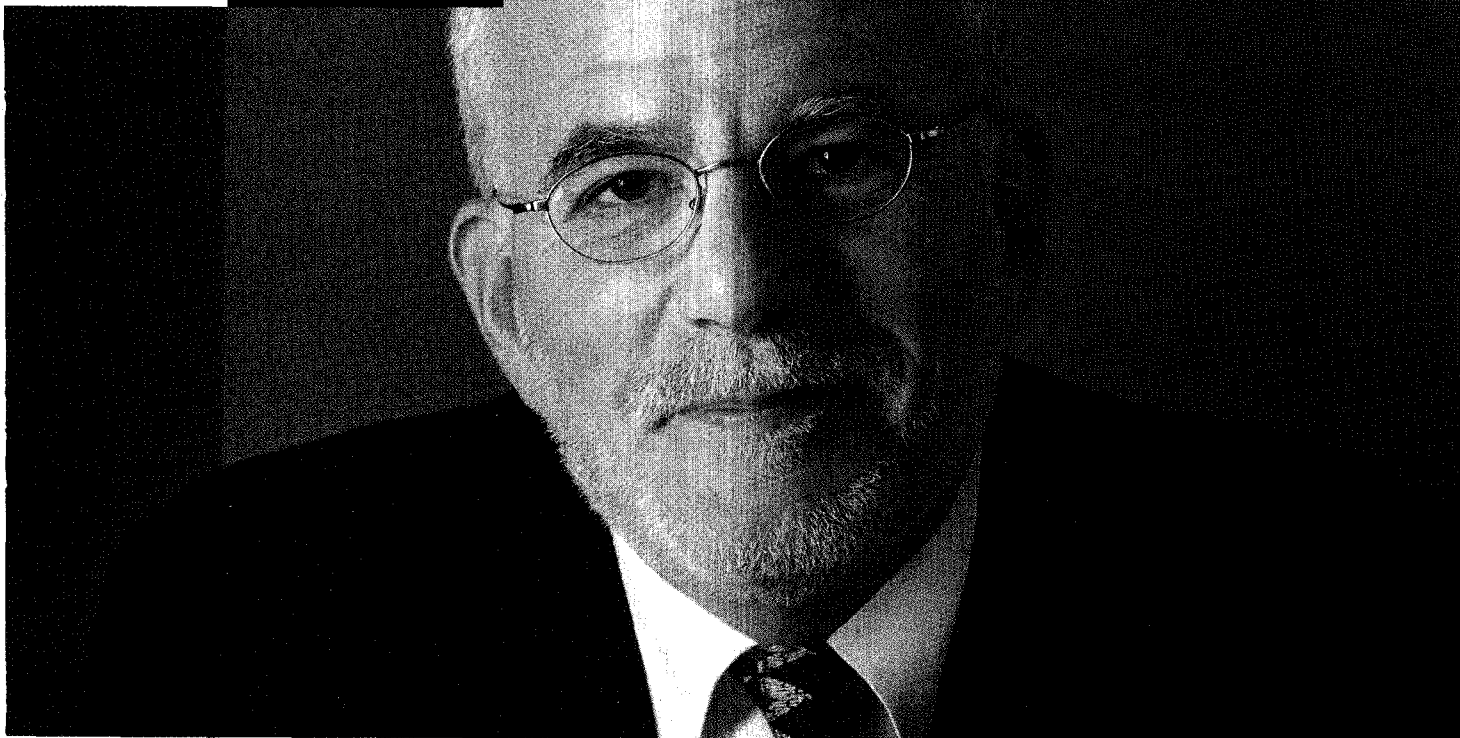
During the twenty-five years of his reign, according to Crișan's tally, Nicolae Ceaușescu shot about 400 bears. In the earlier years he sometimes hosted shooting parties at which guests were welcome to kill game—deer, boar, even some of those precious bears. On a single day's hunt in 1974 Ceaușescu shot twenty-two bears, and his guests another eleven. In later years he jealously kept the bears for himself. From 1983 until his death, in 1989, according to Crișan, Ceaușescu bagged 130. His most notable fit of excess occurred in the autumn of 1983, when, aided by four separate game drives toward his position, Ceaușescu shot twenty-four bears in one day.

That slaughter occurred in a hunting area called Cușma, within the Bistrița district, not far from a luxurious hunting lodge known as Dealul Negru ("the Black Hill"), which had

been built expressly for Ceaușescu and his wife. Having heard about the 1983 crop of bears at Cușma, Ceaușescu announced his intention to visit. This triggered a scramble of preparations. The high seats were repaired. The forest roads were improved. The bears were fed—generously, with two tons of fruit and about 450 pounds of bear chow poured into the area each day for six weeks. The hunting lodge was made spiffy. The local Party office recruited 400 citizens to serve as beaters, and from among the local police and the Securitate came a hundred more. Ceaușescu arrived by helicopter on the morning of the hunt, October 15. The plan was to split the beaters into three groups, for three separate drives, and then marshal them all into a giant sweep of the forest for a climactic fourth. Crișan's book describes how the day unfolded, with Ceaușescu, in one high seat and then another, blasting at bears, killing bears, wounding bears, as they fled toward his position. After the first drive, in which he killed three medium-sized animals and injured two but missed two others that ran back into the forest, Ceaușescu complained petulantly about the arrangements. God forbid that two bears out of seven should escape—or, if God wouldn't forbid it, the Conducător would. Next year, he commanded, there should be a fence along here, dammit, to channel the animals inexorably toward the high seat. Yes, yes, the district director promised, next year there would be a fence.

After the second and third drives, having killed seven more bears, Ceaușescu was still unsatisfied. The fourth drive began, the big one, with hundreds of beaters moving down

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brushy hillsides toward a valley. The security men carried semi-automatic rifles; the foresters had small-gauge shotguns; they all shouted and fired into the air, setting up a din. Vasile Crișan took refuge on a high seat, from where he could watch without too much danger that Ceaușescu would mistake him for a bear. As the beaters pushed within a few hundred yards of the firing line, they came virtually shoulder to shoulder. "The bears were running in every direction, trying to escape," Crișan wrote. "But it was useless, it was impossible." Bears fell dead, bears were wounded; amid the chaos Crișan couldn't tell just how many, but few if any seemed to be getting away. Ceaușescu blazed on with a pair of Holland & Holland .375s, a minion beside him reloading one rifle while he fired the other. When the shooting and the hollering stopped, the forest workers started dragging in carcasses. Twenty-four dead bears were lugged back to the hunting lodge (where Elena could admire them), laid out in two rows, and framed with freshly cut brush, like trout on a platter garnished with parsley. Ceaușescu posed for photos. "We, the foresters, gathered at a certain distance," Crișan recalled. He added, in tight-lipped understatement, "Contrasting feelings governed us." He had devoted much of his life to hunting, but he labeled this sorry episode the Massacre of Bistrița.

Vasile Crișan was just one of many such facilitators. Forest Department fieldmen in various parts of Romania still tell tales, some proudly, some loathingly, of the hunts they helped to arrange for Ceaușescu. Down in the

Argeș district there's Viciu Buceloiu, a *tehnician de vânătoare* ("supervisory warden") of three hunting areas, who remembers Ceaușescu not just for his imperious temper but also for the grandfatherly sweetness he often showed to Buceloiu's little daughter, Petra. In Valea Bogații, a valley not far from Brașov, there's a gamekeeper named Gheorghe Bumbu, a thin man who wears an olive Forest Department uniform, a Tyrolean-style felt hat under which his ears protrude widely, and a sad, sheepish half smile like Stan Laurel's. Bumbu assisted at a hunt in the spring of 1989, during which Ceaușescu took a bear worth 616 CIC points—one of the biggest, and among the last, that the Shot One ever killed. Working out of a local office in a village called Izvorul Mureșului ("Source of the Mureș"), near the headwaters of the Mureș River, is a short, red-faced man, Laszlo Kedves, whose head tops his wide shoulders and squared-off body like the cap on a pint of whiskey. Kedves is laconic at first acquaintance but gradually, over coffee, can be enticed to share some of his recollections of the many occasions when Ceaușescu came hunting in his areas; of a particular visit in April of 1989, during which Ceaușescu bounced from one high seat to another by helicopter in order to kill ten bears in a day; of the time

Ceaușescu hosted Muammar Qaddafi, and the two of them shot every animal within sight. Up in Bistrița, that famously bear-rich district, is a retired warden named Tudor Tofan, a husky, plainspoken fellow who rose through the ranks to a point where his duties covered three hunting areas, encompassing Cușma and the Dealul Negru lodge. Back in the autumn of 1983, the time of Ceaușescu's twenty-four-bear slaughter, Tofan was a mere gamekeeper. Probably he knew at least some of those dead animals by names he had given them himself.

Tudor Tofan consents to meet me for a chat. In a borrowed office at the district headquarters he rests his thick brown forearms on a bureaucrat's desk and responds to my questions with answers so terse and direct that they seem like karate chops. He resembles the actor Ed Asner—or, rather, what Asner might look like if he'd spent much of his life outdoors, feeding rotten apples to bears. Yes, Tofan says, Cușma and two other hunting areas were his responsibility. Together they encompassed 155 square miles of premium bear habitat, attended by four gamekeepers. Within the three areas in any given year lived about forty bears. Of those forty, as things are now managed, maybe twelve to fifteen would

be "hunted" (by which he means killed) each year. The "harvest" quota for each hunting area is flexible, to be adjusted annually by upper Forest Department officials, based on recommendations from the wardens.

But wait—twelve to fifteen, from a resident pool

of just forty? To me that sounds far too high. It sounds unsustainable. Offering numbers and memories, not justifications, Tofan says yes, and it was higher still in the time of Ceaușescu. More like twenty-five bears, he says, all of which were killed by Ceaușescu himself, nobody else. Next question?

I'm not sure what has compelled Tudor Tofan's receptiveness to this interview. A lingering sense of duty? The summons of a district chief who may somehow still control his pension? It certainly isn't the sheer joy of reminiscing to a snoopy foreign writer. Nor has he come to bellyache or emote. We discuss the stages of his career. We discuss the schedule of supplementary feeding within his three hunting areas and the amounts of food involved. We discuss the contents of those special pellets—oats? corn? bone meal? He doesn't seem to know or to care. He can't say how they are made. We touch on the problem of bears in orchards during autumn, when the fruit is ripe, and on the conflict between bears and shepherds. He mentions several cases of bear attack on people—in each case a wounded bear lashing back at a hunter or a gamekeeper. He describes the arrangements under which foreign hunters pay big money to the Forest Department for the privilege of shooting a

Ceaușescu had styled himself the Conducător, "supreme leader, boss, master." After his summary execution he was remembered by some as "Împușcatul," meaning "the Shot One."

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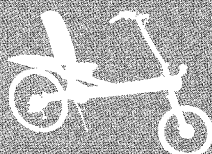
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bear. Usually it's a cash transaction, he says, and the money is split between ministry and departmental coffers in Bucharest and the district office. What reaches the district goes back into food and other expenses related to maintaining the bear population. A large, handsome bear might carry a price of \$15,000 to \$20,000 (usually paid in deutschmarks or, more recently, euros), not including what the client pays to a foreign hunting-tour company for packaging the trip. Bear hunting amounts to big business in an economy as decrepit as Romania's. *Ursus arctos* is an export product, yielding significant sums of hard currency. Although I'd like to know what Tofan himself was earning when he retired (\$60 a month? \$100? \$200?), I'm not cruel enough to ask.

I do ask whether he's a hunter. "Da," he replies. Mostly for wild boar, red deer, roe deer. And bears? No, not bears, Tofan says. Bears are too expensive. That's a rich man's game. And the department favors foreigners for the permits, he says, because the law requires them to pay higher fees. Germans, Austrians, Spaniards, Mexicans, Belgians, Frenchmen—they're the ones who kill Romanian bears. All foreigners nowadays. Back before 1990 only Ceaușescu himself hunted bears. No one else could. No one else dared. Tudor Tofan remembers it.

He remembers October 15, 1983. The big boss, the little man, came in his helicopter to Dealul Negru. They had prepared for him, Tofan says, by closing off other hunting areas and putting out extra food. The gamekeepers organized those drives. Ceaușescu stood in his high seat with two attendants, one of them always reloading a gun. He took what was handed to him, and he fired, killing more than twenty bears. Was he a good shot? I ask. "*Forte bun* ['very good']," Tofan concedes. Anyway, good enough for the circumstances. But there's more to a real sportsman, he implies, than good marksmanship. After swallowing a gulp of anger, and in response to no particular question, this stolid, dedicated ex-professional makes a brief statement. As filtered through my interpreter, Tofan says of Ceaușescu, "He hunt too much bears. Too much, for a single hunter, to shot so much bears. He was not allow somebody else to shot bears—only him."

And the skins? They were sent to Bucharest for processing. Most of them, Tofan guesses, are probably now at that museum near Posada.

The growth curve of the Romanian bear population over the past sixty years, as charted by ICAS, shows a curiously positive correlation between ursine abundance and autocratic oppression. Bad governance of a very particular sort has been good for *Ursus arctos* in the Carpathians.

In 1965, when Gheorghiu-Dej's death opened the way for Nicolae Ceaușescu, the bear count was just above 4,000, as I've mentioned. Over the next decade, the early phase of Ceaușescu's bear-killing mania, the population dipped slight-

ly and then rose again. By 1978 it stood at 5,204. The Forest Department was now essentially farming bears, through supplemental feeding, which probably helped to increase both the growth rate of individual animals and the survival rate of cubs. In 1988, the last full year of Ceaușescu's dictatorship, the Forest Department calculated a bear population of 7,780. That's amazingly high for the habitat in question—which is roughly equal in area to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, back in America, with its 450 to 550 grizzly bears. At the peak of the curve, in other words, there were *fifteen times* as many members of the species *Ursus arctos* in the Romanian Carpathians as presently inhabit Yellowstone National Park and its contiguous forests, which constitute one of the most celebrated bear sanctuaries in the world. This discrepancy says as much about political arrangements, and about thresholds of social tolerance, as it does about the supplemental value of corn, horsemeat, and deliquescent fruit.

But what exactly does it say? That totalitarianism is beneficial to bears? That dictatorship yields better conservation results than private land ownership, open hunting, and cultural priorities that value livestock over native carnivores? These are ugly questions, but they serve as reminders of an important truth: we will not succeed in preserving viable populations of large, dangerous, flesh-eating creatures on this planet unless we move beyond the comfort of our easy assumptions. Big predators tend to have big needs and big appetites—as does the global population of *Homo sapiens*. Brown bears and other such impetuous, inconvenient beasts won't survive in the wild unless we realistically measure their costs and then decide how, and by whom, those costs will be paid.

With the fall of Ceaușescu, Romanian bear management became less political and more commercial. Soon afterward a young ethnic-Hungarian forestry engineer, Arpad Sarkany, set himself up as a broker between the Romanian Forest Department and foreign hunters who might be tempted to come shooting in the Carpathians.

"We are the *organizator* for the bear hunt in Romania," Sarkany tells me from behind the fine wooden desk in his office in the town of Sfântu Gheorghe. His pretty-good English is seasoned with the Transylvanian variant of a Hungarian accent. "Eighty percent of the bear hunting is coming through us."

Eighty percent of how much, I wonder, amounting to how many bears? Each spring the Forest Department proposes a kill quota, based on its area-by-area estimate of the total bear population. In a recent year the population estimate was 5,616; that year's quota for hunting (according to Sarkany's casual recollection) was seventy bears, or maybe seventy-two. Either way, it was barely more than one percent of the total. If Sarkany's figures are correct, the annual cull should be sustainable, provided additional restrictions are in force to protect females with cubs.

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But sustainability is only one issue. Whether commercialized hunting is the best way to conserve a population of large predators is another question. Arpad Sarkany contends that it is; by his logic, if no bears were shot, the bear population would be doomed. It would soon disappear from Romania. Why? "Because is no interest, no *economical* interest, to this *especies*." Without those hunting fees flowing to the Forest Department and those payments to local businesses for food, lodging, travel, and taxidermy, the incentive for close management would vanish, the supplemental feeding would cease, and the habitat would be lost to excessive timber harvesting and other forms of land conversion in the new, desperate Romanian economy. To have bears we must kill bears, honoring each death with the electronic tweet of a cash register. So goes the argument. To me it's a tedious paradox, not a liberating insight, and no matter how often I hear it, applied to one or another magnificent species in various corners of the world, each time I find it tedious afresh. But beyond quibbling over details of incentive arrangements and enforcement, I can't rationally disagree.

Viciu Buceloiu, tall and darkly handsome, like a soap-opera actor in the twilight of his career, smokes too many cigarettes for his own good. As the supervisory warden for three hunting areas near a town called Domnești, in the Argeș district, he feels job pressure, though perhaps not so acutely as in years past. He has worked for the Forest Department since 1972. This is the fellow whose little daughter, Petra, now a grown woman, brought out a certain doting tenderness in Nicolae Ceaușescu on the otherwise tense occasions when the Conducător descended into Domnești for a hunt. Buceloiu, having assisted at those hunts several times yearly for eighteen years, has a considerable archive of mixed memories. A survivor, a dutiful functionary who balances professional discretion with instinctive generosity, he proves to be one of my most hospitable Romanian contacts.

He sends me into the forest with his gamekeepers. He hosts me for long evenings of bear watching from his high seats. He opens his house, his bottle of homemade *țuica* (plum brandy), and his family snapshot albums to me. He provides me with photocopied excerpts from *Catalogul Trofeelor*, the record book of national hunting trophies (which tells a wet story dryly: of the fifty highest-scoring bearskins ever recorded in Romania, forty-five came from kills credited to "N. Ceaușescu"). I impose on Buceloiu my specific requests and my greedy, unfocused curiosity, to which he and his wife respond with graciousness, coffee, fresh strawberries, chocolate cake, corn on the cob, a form of deep-fried Romanian pastry called *gogoș*, and information. One afternoon, as we sit in their living room, which is spread with a half dozen bearskins like so many throw rugs, Buceloiu puts a video-cassette into the player. He offers no preface or explanation. Music, credits—it's a little documentary about *Ursus arctos*.

The narration is in Romanian. The production quality is rough. There's some footage of a bear attacking sheep. Another bear, in the act of pilfering a chicken, is interrupted by a woman with a broom and a fierce little dog, who together drive it away, panicked and chickenless. There's commentary on the anatomy and diet of the species; on the mating habits and reproductive schedule. There are scenes of big yearling cubs, raised in captivity at a government-run rearing compound down in the Argeș district (with the notion that they'd eventually be released to serve as more targets for Ceaușescu). The cubs are loaded into wire cages and then onto a helicopter for transfer back into the wild. There are shots of smiling Forest Department men in felt hats, opening the cages at a release site. Eleven cubs emerge simultaneously, looking confused. Within days of their release, Buceloiu comments caustically, the first of them would be blundering into fatal encounters with human beings. That rearing compound was futile, he says. The video ends. He pops in another. This one is more political.

It begins like a fulsome biographical documentary: clips of Ceaușescu in his public role, kissing babies, attending banquets, making state visits abroad. Ceaușescu the family man. Ceaușescu the sportsman, on a hunting excursion. He arrives by helicopter. Later he admires his day's kill, dozens of dead chamois laid side by side. In the background of one shot, fleetingly, appears Viciu Buceloiu himself, looking a dozen years younger. Then the scene shifts, the mood shifts, and I see Ceaușescu at a cluster of microphones on a balcony, addressing many thousands of Romanians in an urban square. Suddenly the camera captures something indecorous and unexpected—the crowd interrupting him. People start to jeer. Ceaușescu waves, as though to hush them. They refuse to be hushed. He looks flustered. More jeers. On the balcony alarmed minions slide into motion. Again he waves, a gesture of befuddlement. This is the very moment—on the morning of December 21, 1989, in Bucharest, as Ceaușescu stood before a populace so disgusted, weary, and angry that it would accept its own docility no longer—when he lost control. Recalcitrant hoots from the crowd. "Hallo," he says. "Hallo, hallo." Wake up, he seems to be trying to tell them. Remember your manners, remember your fear; this is *me*. But they are awake, now more than ever. Elena, in the background, starts hollering at someone. She seems to have sensed, more quickly than her husband, that this break in the national trance could be catastrophic for both of them.

An abrupt cut. The next scene shows Ceaușescu stepping disconsolately from an armored truck. He wears a rumpled dress shirt, a tie, a dark topcoat. That coat, Buceloiu tells me—an idle aside, reflecting his own sense of intimate connection to the drama—was lined with bearskin.

Inside a drab room Ceaușescu sits at a table, Elena beside him. The room seems to be cold; anyway, they don't remove their coats. Bundled around his neck is a brown scarf. He makes an argumentative response to a comment from a



person unseen. The camera doesn't pan; it holds on the Ceaușescus unremittingly, and by this time I've realized that we're watching the kangaroo trial.

You had a luxurious life, says the offscreen inquisitor. Meanwhile, he says, people starved. They received only a miserable ration, two hundred grams of sausage per day. You had the army to enforce your power. But now even the army has turned against you. Do you hear what we're saying? Stand up. Answer. You're a coward. With the army gone, you had your personal sharpshooters, opening fire on the citizenry. Who were they, those snipers? Children died, old folks. Who gave the order? You're guilty of genocide. Do you realize you're no longer President of Romania? What about the money in Swiss bank accounts?

Intermittently during this litany of accusations, Ceaușescu stares at the ceiling. He reaches across and sets his hand com-
fortingly on the hand of Elena, who shows no response. She has withdrawn into a gloom so cold it appears almost like boredom. Sporadically she rouses to haggle. The people love us, the intellectuals love us, she says; they won't stand for it when they hear you've arrested us. The people will fight against this treason!, Ceaușescu adds, shaking his finger. As though to refute that notion, to pre-empt that remote possibility, the video lurches ahead—as the National Salvation Front did—to a point of finality: a freeze-frame image of Ceaușescu's fresh corpse, necktie still tied, a splash of blood beside his head. Silence. End of tape. Buceloiu turns off the machine.

Earlier I asked his opinion about what happened to

Ceaușescu. Was it inordinately severe, or was it deserved? "It was murder," Buceloiu told me. Now, having seen this lame pantomime of a tribunal, I sense more vividly what he means. He means that the principal movers of the revolutionary junta had their own reasons—urgently expedient ones—for wanting Nicolae Ceaușescu not just deposed but exterminated. It wasn't the people's anger that killed him; it was a more coldly and narrowly taken decision. Alive, he would always be dangerous to those whose own political résumés weren't impeccably democratic. He would always be capable of stirring an uncomfortable recollection that (as one candid Romanian bear biologist told me) the cult of the dictator requires a cadre of cultists and an institutionalized complicity as well as a dictator. More immediately, he might give hope and persistence to those loyalist snipers who were still killing peaceful demonstrators in the streets of Bucharest. Dead, he was instantly irrelevant—and certain people could hope that their own pasts, full of deft opportunism and other embarrassments, had been rendered irrelevant also.

Call it murder, or call it mortal politics of exactly the sort Ceaușescu himself had long practiced. If his execution was expedient, it was no more so than, say, war as an instrument of national purpose, or lethal injection as an instrument of criminal deterrence, or trophy hunting as an instrument of conservation. ▀

David Quammen is the author of The Song of the Dodo (1996), among other books. This article is drawn from Monster of God: The Man-eating Predator in the Jungles of History and the Mind, to be published by W. W. Norton in August.

BLOODLINES

.....

THE NORWEGIAN GRANDSON

I am the grandchild of Norwegian forgetters.
I am a nephew of those who stole the onions.
We are all guests at the criminal's wedding.

We sense despair and injustice when we pick up
A fallen wren's nest, but we love to feel
The little crackling of the abandoned eggshells.

Drinking a drop of water increases our thirst.
Black-and-white movies intensify our longing
For night to arrive and take over from day.

The shadowy cave we live in extends far out
Over the world. Plato said that. Even Amundsen
And all his dogs couldn't find the end of it.

Stars have set so often in the woods without
Bringing the Magi, that the badger drinks
Sadness each time his nose touches the water.

Last night I brought my grief to my teacher.
I asked him what I could do about that.
He said, "I thought you came because you liked me!"

—ROBERT BLY

MY FATHER ON A BICYCLE

If you ever saw my father in shorts,
you wouldn't forget his stick-thin legs,
the knees knobby as windfall dwarf apples.

And the only time I saw him ride a bike,
Oakes Street, I think, he pedaled "no hands"
down the street to show me the stance.

He wasn't a runner either, though he'd move
at a quick trot when trouble came to our door—
usually when the twins caught somebody's wrath.

Once they set an oatgrass field on fire, and trucks
came, red and furious down the boulevard.
Another time, after a morning of water-fat balloons

lobbed at cars, the cops shadowed our porch.
Our father was an ambler, a stroller, a tall stander.
I can see him, heron-alert, bareheaded,

the waters of the Satsop or Nooksack, the cold
Chehalis, up past his knees, casting a line
among boulders, deadwood, and drop-offs.
Deep, moving water his abiding friend.

—PATRICIA CLARK

UNCLE GROSSMAN

Uncle Grossman quotes the Greeks and the gods
and says the Great One knows when a feather
falls to a field, then he clears his throat
with the sound of a brake yanked into place.
Grossman, our childless nuncle, bumps
his avuncular head against the bird feeder.
As seed fills his fedora's rim, he says,
*Pain makes a world that would not exist
except for pain.* On the way to dinner,
Uncle Grossman describes his current loves,
a woman with five bulldogs, and the nurse
who sneaks him endless Xanax.
Life is comic, he says, *and life is tragic.*
Uncle G. orders his favorite dish, Veal P.,
but does not recommend it.
Although our uncle has not been born again,
he booms with the strength of the just born
against white chocolate, the rosary,
and Galileo's fate. When a small nephew
asks us to drive faster, his uncle states,
*No matter how many cars you pass,
you cannot pass the car ahead of you.*
It's a rainy evening when we see him to the bus.
The long aisle of windows steams,
and we wave goodbye to Uncle Grossman
through the little circle of clarity
he keeps rubbing clean with the heel of his fist.

—JOHN SKOYLES

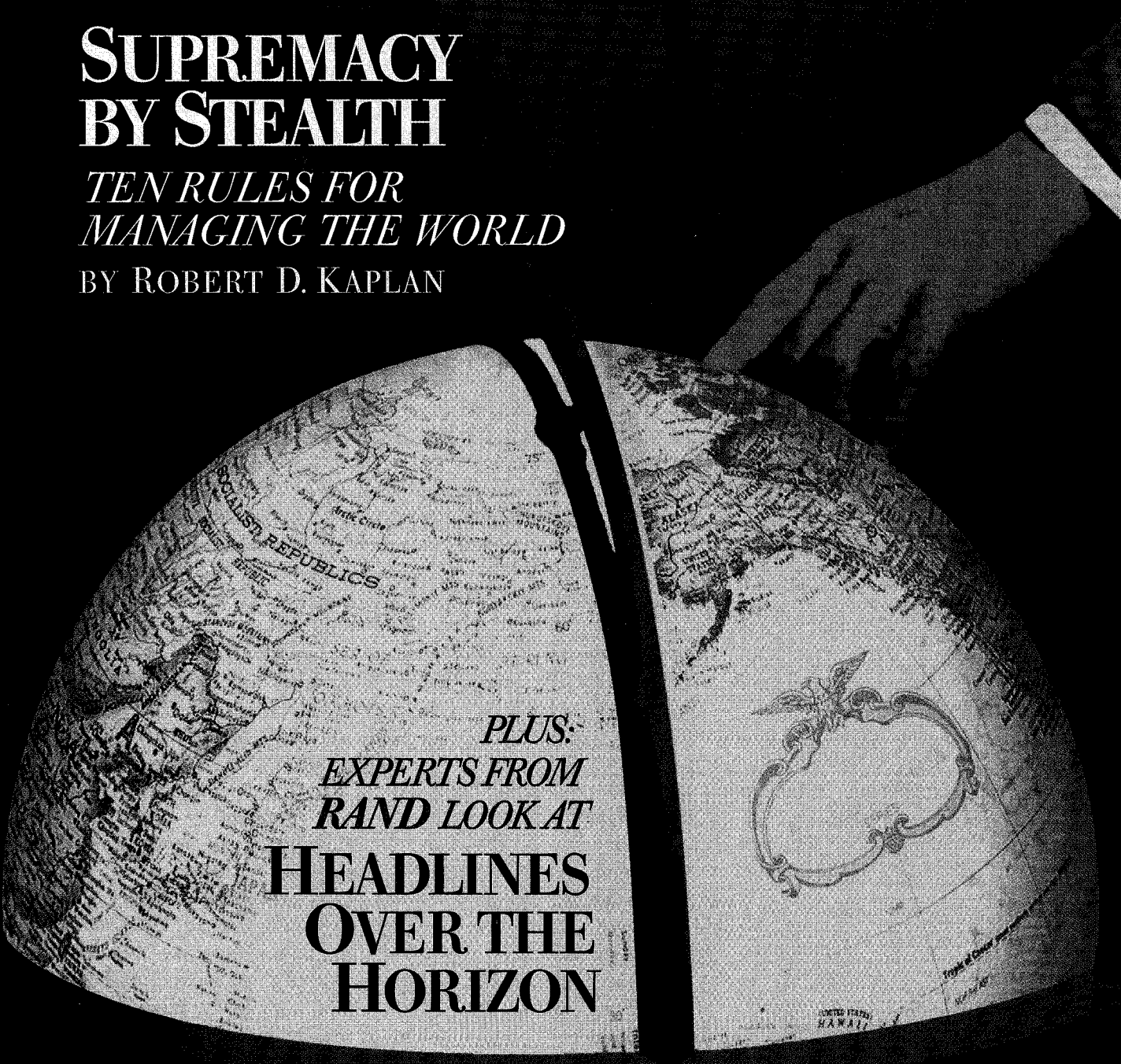
Robert Bly's most recent books of poetry include Eating the Honey of Words: New and Selected Poems (1999) and The Night Abraham Called to the Stars (2001). Patricia Clark is the author of North of Wondering (1999). Her work has appeared recently in Poetry and Slate. John Skoyles is the author of three poetry collections. His most recent book is a memoir, Secret Frequencies: A New York Education (2003).

STATE OF THE WORLD

SUPREMACY BY STEALTH

*TEN RULES FOR
MANAGING THE WORLD*

BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN



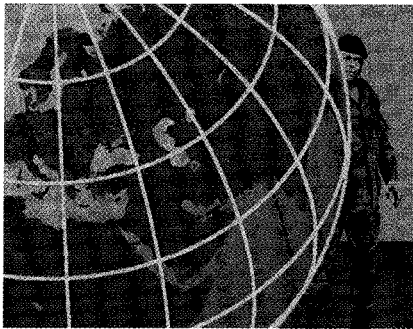
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SUPREMACY BY STEALTH

BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN

It is a cliché these days to observe that the United States now possesses a global empire—different from Britain's and Rome's but an empire nonetheless. It is time to move beyond a statement of the obvious. Our recent effort in Iraq, with its large-scale mobilization of troops and immense concentration of risk, is not indicative of how we will want to act in the future. So how should we operate on a tactical level to manage an unruly world? What are the rules and what are the tools?



In the late winter of 2003, as the United States was dispatching tens of thousands of soldiers to the Middle East for an invasion of Iraq, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command was deployed in sixty-five countries. In Nepal the Special Forces were training government troops to hunt down the Maoist rebels who were terrorizing that nation. In the Philippines they were scheduled to increase in number for the fight against the Abu Sayyaf guerrillas. There was also Colombia—the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, after Israel and Egypt, and the third most populous country in Latin America, after Brazil and Mexico. Jungly, disease-ridden, and chillingly violent, Colombia is the possessor of untapped oil reserves and is crucially important to American interests.

The totalitarian regimes in Iraq and North Korea, and the gargantuan difficulty of displacing them, may have been grabbing headlines of late, but the future of military conflict—and therefore of America's global responsibilities over the coming decades—may best be gauged in Colombia, where guerrilla groups, both left-wing and right-wing, have downplayed ideology in favor of decentralized baronies and franchises built on terrorism, narco-trafficking, kidnapping, counterfeiting, and the siphoning of oil-pipeline revenues from local governments. FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), for example, is Karl Marx at the top and Adam Smith all the way down the command chain. Guerrilla warfare is now all about business, and physical cruelty knows no limits. It extends to torture (fish hooks to tear up the genitals), gang rape, and the murder of children whose parents do not cooperate with the insurgents. The Colombian rebels take in hundreds of millions of dollars annually from cocaine-related profits alone, and have documented links to the Irish Republican Army and the Basque separatists (who have apparently advised them on kidnapping and car-bomb tactics). If left unmolested, they will likely establish strategic links with al Qaeda.

Arauca province, a petroleum-rich area in northeastern Colombia, near the Venezuelan border, is a pool-table-flat lesion of broadleaf thickets, scrap-iron settlements, and gravy-brown rivers. The journey from the airfield to the Colombian army base, where a few dozen Green Berets and civil-affairs officers and their support staff are bunkered behind sandbags and concertina wire, is only several hundred yards. Yet U.S. personnel make the journey in full kit, inside armored cars and Humvees with mounted MK-19 40mm grenade launchers. As I stepped off the tarmac in late February, two Colombian soldiers, badly wounded by a car bomb set off by left-wing narcoterrorists (the bomb had been coated with human feces in hopes of causing infection), were being carried on stretchers to the base infirmary, where a Special Forces medic was waiting to treat them. The day before, the Colombian police had managed to

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deactivate two other bombs in Arauca. The day before that there had been an assassination attempt on a local politician. And the day before that an electricity tower had been bombed, knocking out power in the region. Previous days had brought the usual roadside kidnappings, street-corner bicycle bombings, grenade strikes on police stations, and mortar attacks on Colombian soldiers—using propane cylinders packed with nails, broken glass, and feces.

As we drove through Arauca's mangy streets in a Special Forces convoy, every car and bicycle seemed potentially deadly. Yet the U.S. troops there are defiant, if frustrated. The U.S. government permits them only to train, rather than fight alongside, their Colombian counterparts, but they want the rules of engagement loosened. After a truck unexpectedly pulled out into the street, slowing our convoy and causing us to scan rooftops and parked vehicles (and causing me to sweat more than usual in the humid and fetid atmosphere), a Green Beret with experience on several continents leaned over and said, "If five firemen get killed fighting a fire, what do you do? Let the building burn? I wish people in Washington would totally get Vietnam out of their system."

Back at the base, Major Mike Oliver and Captain Carl Brosky, civil-affairs specialists who between them have served in the Balkans, Africa, and several Latin American countries, were spending the day chasing down two containers of equipment for Arauca's schools and hospital that had been held up in customs at the Venezuelan border. A week earlier, at Tolomeida, several hundred miles south, I had watched Sergeant Ivan Castro, a Puerto Rican from Hoboken, New Jersey, as he patiently taught Colombian soldiers how to sit in a 360-degree "cigar formation" while on reconnaissance, in order to rest in the field without being surprised by the enemy. Later he taught them how to peel back in retreat, without a gap in fire, after making first contact with the enemy. Castro worked twelve hours in the heat that day, speaking in a steady, nurturing tone, working with each soldier until the whole unit performed the drills perfectly.

Even as America's leaders deny that the United States has true imperial intentions, Colombia—still so remote from public consciousness—illustrates the imperial reality of America's global situation. Colombia is only one of the far-flung places in which we have an active military presence. The historian Erich S. Gruen has observed that Rome's expansion throughout the Mediterranean littoral may well have been motivated not by an appetite for conquest per se but because it was thought necessary for the security of the core homeland. The same is true for the United States worldwide, in an age of collapsed distances. This American imperium is without colonies, designed for a jet-and-information age in which mass movements of people and capital dilute the traditional meaning of sovereignty.

Although we don't establish ourselves permanently on the ground in many locations, as the British did, reliance on our military equipment and the training and maintenance that go along with it (for which the international arms bazaar is no substitute) helps to bind regimes to us nonetheless. Rather than the mass conscription army that fought World War II, we now have professional armed forces, which enjoy the soldiering life for its own sake: a defining attribute of an imperial military, as the historian Byron Farwell noted in *Mr. Kipling's Army* (1981).

The Pentagon divides the earth into five theaters. For example, at the intersection of 5° latitude and 68° longitude, in the middle of the Indian Ocean, CENTCOM (the U.S. Central Command) gives way to PACOM (the Pacific Command). At the Turkish-Iranian border it gives way to EUCOM (the European Command). By the 1990s the U.S. Air Force had a presence of some sort on six of the world's continents. Long before 9/11 the Special Forces were conducting thousands of operations a year in a total of nearly 170 countries, with an average of nine "quiet professionals" (as the Army calls them) on each mission. Since 9/11 the United States and its personnel have burrowed deep into foreign intelligence agencies, armies, and police units across the globe.

Precisely because they foment dynamic change, liberal empires—like those of Venice, Great Britain, and the United States—create the conditions for their own demise. Thus they must be especially devious. The very spread of the democracy for which we struggle weakens our grip on many heretofore docile governments: behold the stubborn refusal by Turkey and Mexico to go along with U.S. policy on Iraq. Consequently, if we are to get our way, and at the same time to promote our democratic principles, we will have to operate nimbly, in the shadows and behind closed doors, using means far less obvious than the august array of power displayed in the air and ground war against Iraq. "Don't bluster, don't threaten, but quietly and severely punish bad behavior," says Eliot Cohen, a military historian at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, in Washington. "It's the way the Romans acted." Not just the Romans, of course: "Speak softly and carry a big stick" was Theodore Roosevelt's way of putting it.

We can take nothing for granted. A hundred years ago the British Navy looked fairly invincible for all time. A world managed by the Chinese, by a Franco-German-dominated European Union aligned with Russia, or by the United Nations (an organization that worships peace and consensus, and will therefore sacrifice any principle for their sakes) would be infinitely worse than the world we have now. And so for the time being the highest morality must be the preservation—and, wherever prudent, the accretion—of American power.

The purpose of power is not power itself; it is the fundamentally liberal purpose of sustaining the key characteristics of an orderly world. Those characteristics include

basic political stability; the idea of liberty, pragmatically conceived; respect for property; economic freedom; and representative government, culturally understood. At this moment in time it is American power, and American power only, that can serve as an organizing principle for the worldwide expansion of a liberal civil society. As I will argue below, the United States has acquired this responsibility at a dangerous and chaotic moment in world history. The old Cold War system, for half a century the reigning paradigm in international affairs, is obviously defunct. Enlarging the United Nations Security Council, as some suggest, would make it even harder for that body to achieve consensus on anything remotely substantive. Powers that may one day serve as stabilizing regional influences—India and Russia, China and the European Union—are themselves still unstable or unformed or unconfident or illiberal. Hundreds of new and expanding international institutions are beginning to function effectively worldwide, but they remain fragile. Two or three decades hence conditions may be propitious for the emergence of a new international system—one with many influential actors in a regime of organically evolving interdependence. But until that time arrives, it is largely the task of the United States to maintain a modicum of order and stability. We are an ephemeral imperial power, and if we are smart, we will recognize that basic fact.

The “American Empire” has been discussed ad nauseam of late, but practical ways of managing it have not. Even so, the management techniques are emerging. While realists and idealists argue “nation-building” and other general principles in Washington and New York seminars, young majors, lieutenant colonels, and other middle-ranking officers are regularly making decisions in the field about how best to train Colombia’s army, which Afghan tribal chiefs to support, what kind of coast guard and special forces the Yemeni government requires, how the Mongolians can preserve their sovereignty against Chinese and Russian infiltration, how to transform the Romanian military into a smaller service along flexible Western command lines, and so forth. The fact is that we trust these people on the ground to be keepers of our values and agents of our imperium, and to act without specific instructions. A rulebook that does not make sense to them is no rulebook at all.

The following rules represent a distillation of my own experience and conversations with diplomats and military officers I have met in recent travels on four continents, and on military bases around the United States.

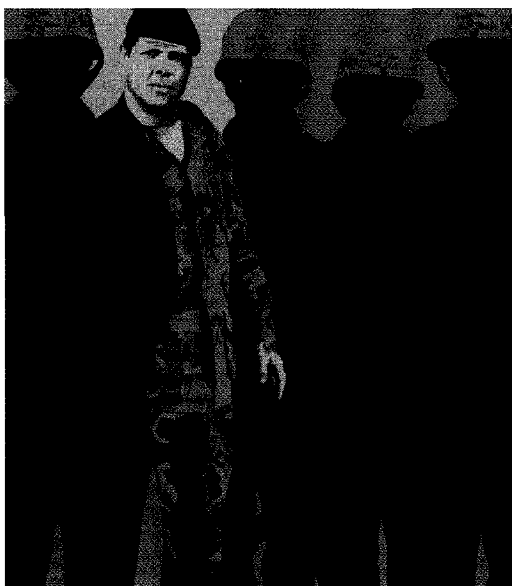
RULE NO. 1

PRODUCE MORE JOPPOLOS

When I asked Major Paul S. Warren, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, home of the Army’s Special Operations Command, what serves as the model for a civil-affairs officer within the Special Operations forces, he said, “Read John Hersey’s *A Bell for Adano*—it’s all there.” The hero of Hersey’s World War II novel is Army Major Victor Joppolo, an Italian-American civil-affairs officer appointed to govern the recently liberated Sicilian town of Adano. Joppolo is full of resourcefulness. He arranges for the U.S. Navy to show local fishermen which parts of the harbor are free of mines, so that they can use their boats to feed the town. He finds a bell from an old Navy destroyer to replace the one that the Fascists took from the local church and melted down for bullets. He countermands his own general’s order outlawing the use of horse-drawn carts, which the town needs to transport food and water. He goes

to the back of a line to buy bread, to show Adano’s citizens that although he is in charge, he is their servant, not their master. He is the first ruler in the town’s history who doesn’t represent a brute force of nature. In Hersey’s words,

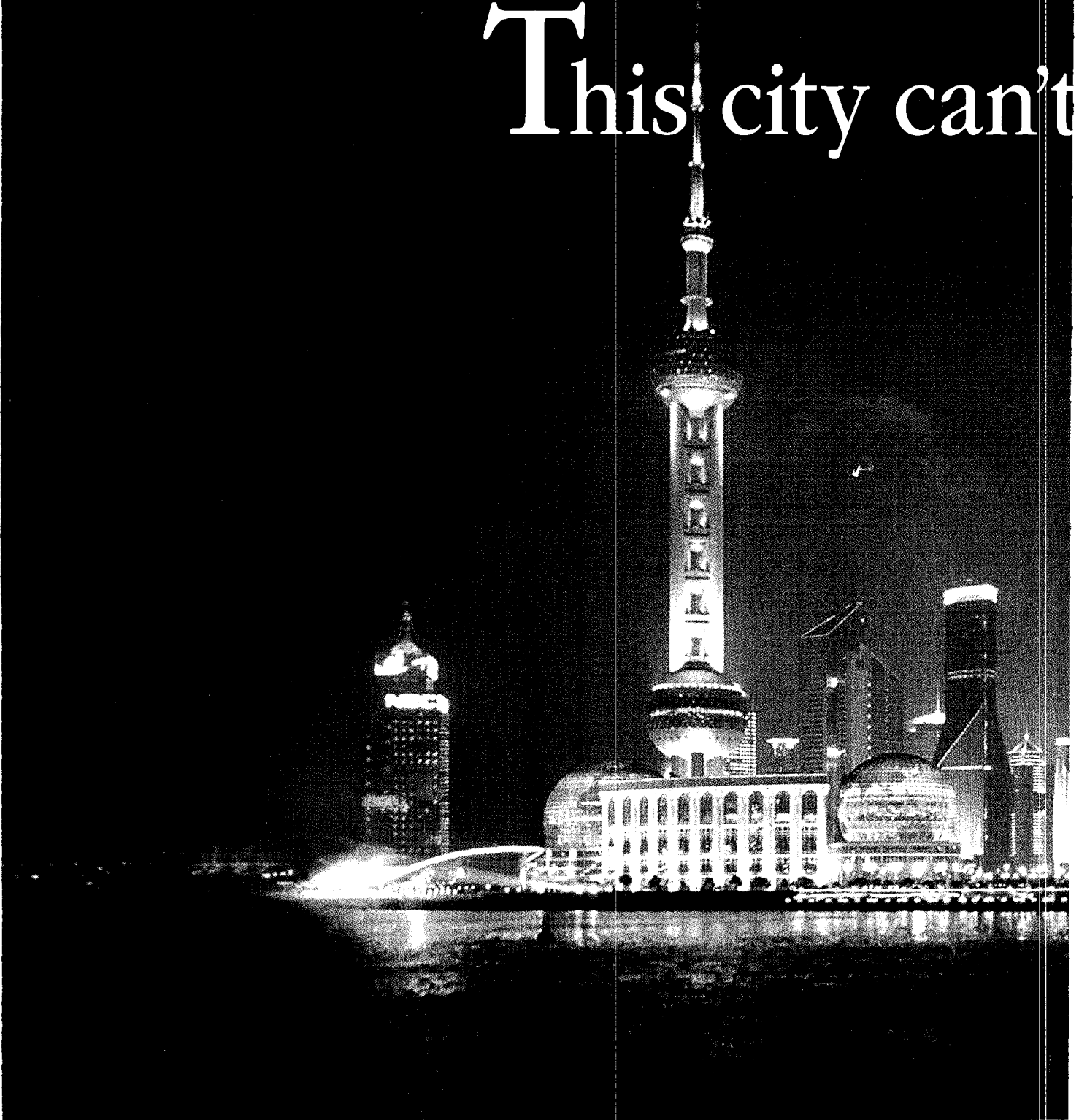
[Men like Joppolo are] *our future in the world. Neither the eloquence of Churchill nor the humanness of Roosevelt, no Charter, no four freedoms or fourteen points, no dreamer’s diagram so symmetrical and so faultless on paper, no plan, no hope, no treaty—none of these things can guarantee anything. Only men can guarantee, only the behavior of men under pressure, only our Joppolos.*



One good man is worth a thousand wonks. As *The Times of India* wrote on July 7, 1893, the mind of a sharp political agent should not be “crowded with fusty learning.” Ian Copland, a historian of the British Raj, wrote that “extroverts and sporting types, sensitive to the cultural milieu,” were always necessary to win the confidence of local rulers. In Yemen recently I observed a retired Special Forces officer cementing friendships with local sheikhs and military men by handing out foot-long bowie knives as gifts. In a world of tribes and thugs manliness still goes a long way.

The right men or women, no matter how few, will find the right hinge in a given situation to change history. The Spartans turned the tide of battle in Sicily by dispatching only a small mission, headed by Gylippus. His arrival in 414 B.C. kept the Syracusans from surrendering to the Athenians. It broke the Athenian land blockade of Syracuse, rallied other Sicilian city-states to the cause, and was crucial to the defeat of the Athenian fleet the following year. The United States sent

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a similarly small mission to El Salvador in the 1980s: never more than fifty-five Special Forces trainers at one time. But that was enough to teach the Salvadoran military to confront more effectively the communist guerrillas while beginning to transform itself from an ill-disciplined constabulary force into something much closer to a professional army.

"You produce a product and let him loose," explains Sidney Shachnow, a retired Army major general. "The Special Forces that dropped in to help [the Afghan warlord Abdul Rashid] Dostum, the guys who grew beards, got on horses, and dressed up like Afghans, were not ordered to do so by Tommy Franks. These were decisions they made in the field."

Shachnow himself is a perfect example of the kind of man he describes. Hard and chiseled, he calls to mind Ligustinus, a Roman centurion who spent nearly half his life in the Army—in Spain, Macedonia, and Greece—and was cited for bravery thirty-four times. Shachnow is a Holocaust survivor. Born in 1933, in Lithuania, he endured a Nazi concentration camp as a boy; emigrated to Salem, Massachusetts; joined the Army as a private out of high school; after reaching the rank of sergeant first class attended officers' training school; and served two combat tours in Vietnam, where he was wounded twice. He rose to be a two-star general and a guiding light of the Special Forces. His success resulted from decisions made on instinct and impulse, and from an ability to take advantage of cultural settings in which he did not naturally fit—exactly the ability that U.S. trainers and commandos in El Salvador, Afghanistan, and so many other places have had to possess.

"A Special Forces guy," Shachnow told me, "has to be a lethal killer one moment and a humanitarian the next. He has to know how to get strangers who speak another language to do things for him. He has to go from knowing enough Russian to knowing enough Arabic in a few weeks, depending on the deployment. We need people who are cultural quick studies." Shachnow was talking about a knack for dealing with people, almost a form of charisma. The right man will know how to behave in a given situation—will know how to find things out and act on them.

RULE NO. 2 *STAY ON THE MOVE*

Xenophon's Greek army cut through the Persian Empire in 401 B.C., with the troops freely debating each step. We should be mobile in the same way—get bogged down militarily nowhere, but make sure we have military access everywhere. Because we have to manage a world in which—as always—old regimes periodically crumble, disaster lies in becoming too deeply implanted in more than a handful of countries at once. Here our provincialism helps. As Hayward S. Florer, a retired Special Forces colonel, told me, "Even our Special Ops people are insular. Sure, we like the adventure with other cultures, learning the history and language. But at heart many of us are farm boys who can't

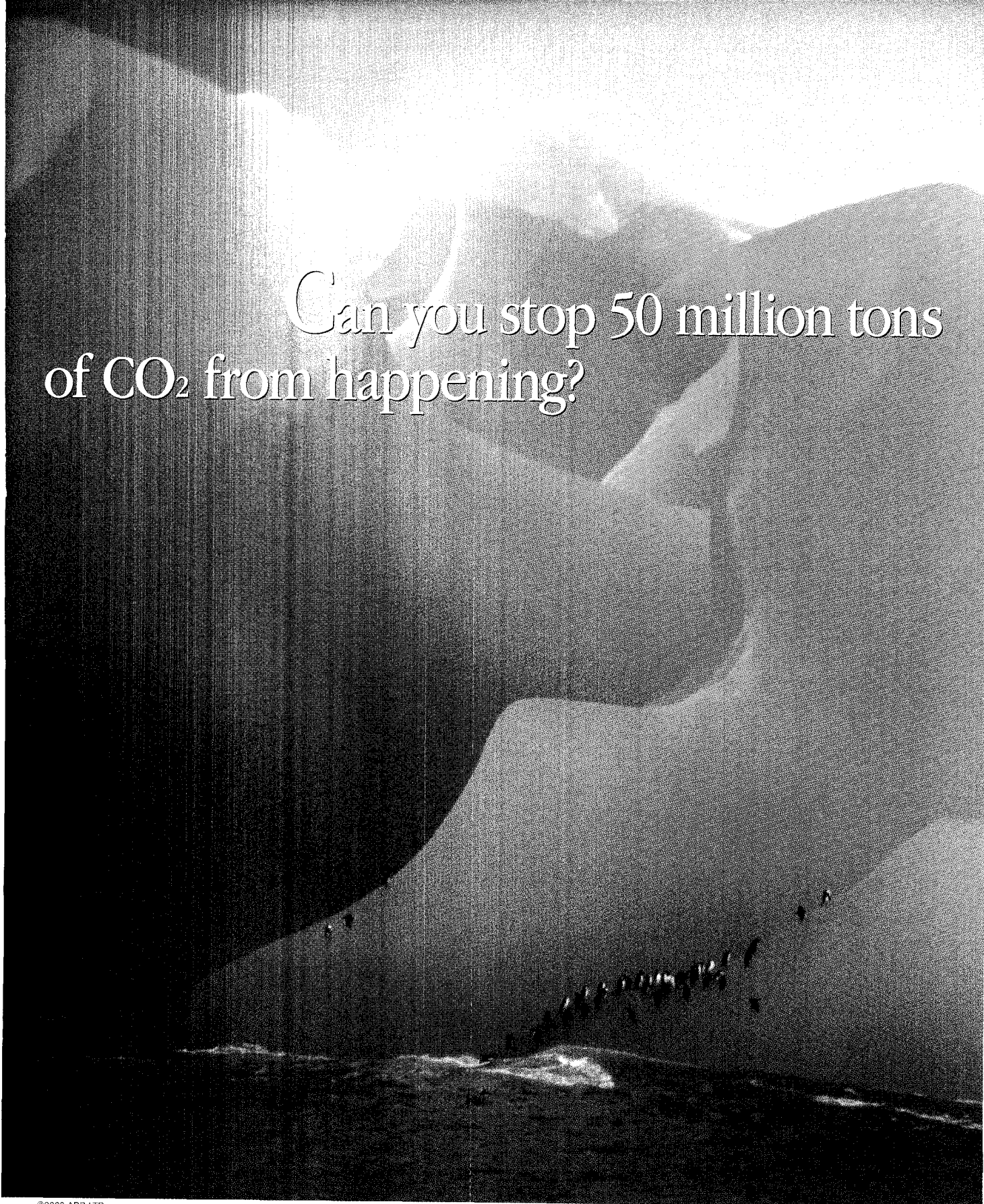
wait to get home. In this way we're not like the British and French. Our insularity protects us from becoming colonials."

Colonialism is in part an outgrowth of cosmopolitanism, the intellectual craving to experience different cultures and locales; it leads, inexorably, to an intense personal involvement in their fate. "We want an empire not of colonies or protectorates but of personal relationships," a Marine lieutenant colonel at Camp Pendleton, in California, told me. "We back into deployments. There doesn't need to be a policy directive from the Pentagon—half the time we don't know what the policy is. We get a message from a Kenyan or Nigerian officer who studied here that his unit needs training. We try to do it. We help decide, based on our needs in a region, who we want to help out." The U.S. military is constantly doing favors for other militaries, favors we call in when we need to. This is how we sometimes get access to places. The formal base rights that we have in forty countries may in the future be less significant than the number of friendships maintained between U.S. officers and their foreign counterparts. With that in mind, the military needs to establish a formal data system for tracking such relationships. At present the method of keeping abreast of these crucial ties is largely anecdotal.

The best tools of access are the so-called "iron majors," a term that really refers to all mid-level officers, from non-commissioned master sergeants and chief warrant officers to colonels. In a sense majors run our military establishment, regardless of who the Secretary of Defense happens to be. Up through the rank of captain an officer hasn't closed the door on other career options. But becoming a major means you've "bought into the corporation," explains Special Forces Major Roger D. Carstens. "We're the ones who are up at four A.M. answering the general's e-mails, making sure all the systems are go."

The United States has set up military missions throughout the formerly communist world, creating situations in which U.S. majors, lieutenant colonels, and full colonels are often advising foreign generals and chiefs of staff. Make no mistake: these officers are policymakers by another name. A Romanian-speaking expert on the Balkans, Army Lieutenant Colonel Charles van Bebber, has become well known in top military circles in Bucharest for helping to start the reform process that led to Romania's integration with NATO. Such small-scale but vital relationships give America an edge there over its Western European allies. One of the reasons that countries like Romania and Bulgaria supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq is that they now see their primary military relationship as being with America rather than with NATO as such.

In formerly communist Mongolia, U.S. Army Colonel Tom Wilhelm, a fluent speaker of Russian who studied at Leningrad State University, is an adviser to the local military. With Wilhelm's help, Mongolia has reoriented its defense strategy toward international peacekeeping—as a



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means of gaining allies in global forums against its rapacious neighbors, Russia and China. The planned dispatch of a Mongolian contingent to help patrol postwar Iraq was the result of what one good man—in this case, Wilhelm—was able to accomplish on the ground. I recently followed him around on an inspection tour of Mongolia's Gobi Desert border with China. We slept in local military outposts, rode Bactrian camels, and spent hours in conversation with mid-level Mongolian officers over meals of horsemeat and camel's milk. It is through such activities that relationships are built and allies are gained in an era when anyplace can turn out to be strategic.

RULE NO. 3

EMULATE SECOND-CENTURY ROME

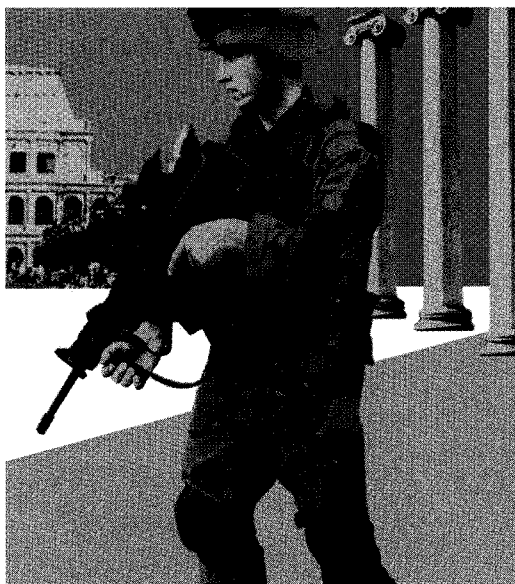
Provincialism is the aspect of our national character that will keep the United States from overextending itself in too many causes. But owing to the wave of immigration from Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America that began in the 1970s, the United States is an international society comparable to Rome in the second century A.D., when the empire reached its territorial zenith under Trajan and, more important, was granting citizenship to elites in the Balkans, the Middle East, and North Africa. (Trajan and Hadrian, in fact, were both from Spain.) Our military, intelligence, and diplomatic communities must now turn to our Iranian-, Arab-, and other hyphenated Americans—our potential Joppolos. At a time when we desperately need more language specialists, it is shameful that we are seeking out so few of the many native speakers at our disposal. The financial incentives we offer them are simply insufficient, and the waiting period for security clearance has become farcically long. This situation has been changing of late for the better: it needs to continue to do so.

Trained area specialists are likewise indispensable. In 1976 Secretary of State Henry Kissinger entrusted the eminent Arabist and diplomat Talcott Seelye, in Lebanon, to carry out two discreet evacuations of American citizens from that war-torn country with the help of the Palestine Liberation Organization—which we did not recognize at the time. Seelye, who was born in Beirut, may not have wholly agreed with Kissinger's foreign policy—but that didn't matter. He knew how to get the job done. The fact that Arabists and other area specialists may be emotionally involved, through marriage or friendship, with host countries—often causing them to dislike the policies that Washington

orders them to execute—can actually be of benefit, because it gives them credibility with like-minded locals. In any case, such tensions between policymakers and agents in the field are typical of imperial systems. We should not be overly concerned about them.

True, comparison is the beginning of all serious scholarship, and area experts are ignorant of much outside their favored patch of ground. Their knowledge of the current reality in a given country is so prodigious that they often cannot imagine a different reality. That is why area experts can say what is going on in a place, but cannot always say what it means. Still, it is impossible to implement any policy without them, as Kissinger and others learned.

Colonel Robert Warburton, the Anglo-Afghan who established the Khyber Rifles regiment on the Northwest Frontier of British India in 1879, was one kind of person needed to manage our interests in distant corners of the world. Warburton spoke fluent Pashto and Persian, and



was at home among both aristocratic Englishmen and Afridi tribesmen. The normally cruel and perfidious Afridis held him in such high esteem that he did not need to go armed among them. Warburton was less a cosmopolitan than a nuts-and-bolts journeyman, whose linguistic skills came from birth and circumstance more than from intellectual curiosity. The American equivalents of Warburton can be found among Arab-Americans posted to Central Command and Latino-Americans posted to Southern Command—people who fit into places like Yemen and Colombia,

but who want only to return to their suburban American homes afterward.

Southern Command, in particular, is full of Spanish-speaking noncommissioned officers: ethnic Mexicans, Dominicans, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans. The relative shortage of speakers of Arabic and other languages in the rest of the military indicates that in the Special Forces, at least, languages may soon have to be recognized as an "occupational skill"—like weaponry, communications, battlefield medicine, engineering, and intelligence, one in which every noncommissioned officer must spend a year specializing. If each Special Forces unit had a couple of officers who were fluent in several languages spoken in the theater command (Arabic, Persian, and Turkish in CENTCOM, for example), our ability to project power would dramatically increase.

The forward basing of area commands is another strategy that would encourage area expertise and language skills. In the years to come we should consider moving Central

NORTHERN COMMAND

HQ: Colorado Springs, Colorado
Assigned Troops: 133,407
Major Bases: 296
Combat Aircraft: 4
Submarines: 38
Warships: 41

EUROPEAN COMMAND

HQ: Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany
Assigned Troops: 112,000
Major Bases: 49
Combat Aircraft: 174
Submarines: 3
Warships: 7

CENTRAL COMMAND

HQ: Tampa, Florida
Assigned Troops: 22,046
Major Bases: 2
Combat Aircraft: unavailable
Submarines: 0
Warships: 7

SOUTHERN COMMAND

HQ: Miami, Florida
Assigned Troops: 1,271
Major Bases: 0
Combat Aircraft: 0
Submarines: 0
Warships: 0

PACIFIC COMMAND

HQ: Honolulu, Hawaii
Assigned Troops: 280,840
Major Bases: 38
Combat Aircraft: 1,679
Submarines: 35
Warships: 75

FLEXIBLE UNITS

Units not assigned to any particular unified combatant command
Troops: 931,700
Combat Aircraft: 3,304
Submarines: 0
Warships: 0

● # of operations
per locale

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS (1993–PRESENT)

The following list comes from *GlobalSecurity.org*; the U.S. military publishes no comprehensive list of its operations. The names are developed by the commanders in chief of the U.S. regional theaters (see above), who are assisted by computer software known as the Code Word, Nickname and Exercise Term System. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense approve all names.

PROVIDE HOPE III (former Soviet Union, 1993) Ongoing humanitarian operation to former Soviet republics.

BALIKATAN (Philippines, 1993) Annual joint counterterrorism exercises, 1981–1994, 1999–present.

IRIS GOLD (Kuwait, 1993–present) Joint exercises with the Kuwaiti military.

DENY FLIGHT (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1993–1995) Enforcement of no-fly zone.

CONTINUE HOPE (Somalia, 1993) Military support of UN humanitarian mission.

SHARP GUARD (Adriatic Sea, 1993–1995) Naval operation to enforce UN sanctions on the former Yugoslavia.

STEADY STATE (Colombia/Peru, 1994–1996) Broad counter-drug operation.

PROVIDE HOPE IV (former Soviet Union, 1994) Ongoing humanitarian operation to former Soviet republics.

DISTANT RUNNER (Rwanda, 1994) Evacuation of U.S. citizens and others.

SEA SIGNAL (Cuba/Haiti, 1994–1996) Humanitarian mission to Haitian and Cuban migrants.

ABLE SENTRY (former Yugoslavia, 1994–present) UN surveillance operation for the security of Macedonia.

QUIET RESOLVE/SUPPORT HOPE (Rwanda, 1994) Humanitarian mission after the Rwandan genocide.

(list continues on page 77)

Command headquarters from Tampa, Florida, to the Middle East, and Southern Command headquarters from Miami back to Panama, where it was until 1997. There is simply no substitute for being in the region when it comes to absorbing language and culture. As a journalist, I have found that in my profession people on location always have better instincts for the local situation than people back in the United States, even if they don't always draw the proper conclusions. Many a mid-level officer has told me that the same holds true in the military.

RULE NO. 4

USE THE MILITARY TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

In an age of expanding democracy, military and intelligence contacts are more important than ever. Civilian politicians in weak and fledgling parliamentary systems come and go. But leading military and security men remain as behind-the-scenes props, sometimes even getting themselves elected to high office—as has happened in Nigeria, Venezuela, and Russia. “Whoever the President of Kenya is, the same group of guys run their special forces and the President’s bodyguards,” one Army Special Operations officer told me. “We’ve trained them. That translates into diplomatic leverage.”

The U.S. military’s bilateral relationships with foreign armies and their officer corps play a substantial role in safeguarding democratic transitions. Militaries have been the pillars of so many Third World societies for so long that the advent of elections can scarcely make them politically irrelevant, especially in Africa and Latin America. In some places, such as Turkey and Pakistan, the military and security services have at times actually enjoyed a reputation for greater liberalism than the civilian authorities. In Colombia in the mid-1990s the civilian government was tainted by drug money; the military police, who were seen to be less corrupt, helped to save our bilateral relationship.

U.S. security-assistance programs also professionalize foreign militaries, thus helping to prevent coups and to improve the human-rights climate. In the 1980s in El Salvador, Colonel J. S. Roach, a member of the operational planning team there, observed that “the Salvadoran military understood they weren’t supposed to violate human rights, but they believed they were driven to extreme measures by extreme circumstances.” One can debate what members of El Salvador’s military “understood,” but Roach’s team and others pounded home the point that violating human rights almost never makes sense from a pragmatic perspective, because it costs the military the civilian support so necessary to rooting out guerrilla insurgents. “Human rights wasn’t a separate one-hour block at the beginning of the day,” Roach said. “You had to find a way to couch it in the training so that it wasn’t just a moralistic approach.” Human-rights abuses didn’t come to an end in El Salvador, but observers agree that they were sharply curbed.

The world is a gritty, messy place, and there are no perfect solutions. But the fact is that Third World military men are more likely to listen to American officers who brief them about human rights as a tool of counterinsurgency than to civilians who talk about universal principles of justice. At any rate, it isn’t only civilians who talk about universal principles: mid-level officers from around the world are regularly sent to Fort Benning, Georgia, for training in the history and necessity of protecting human rights. (The protestors who perennially chain themselves to the gates of Fort Benning, calling its previously named School of the Americas the “School of Torturers,” are implicitly championing the worst possible strategy if they want Latin armies to take human rights seriously—a strategy of isolation, which cuts foreign officers off from American society and values.)

In fact, in places where democracy is especially weak (Peru and Indonesia are obvious examples), a phone call from a U.S. general to a local officer will often advance diplomacy (and also civil society) more effectively than a phone call from the ambassador. Particularly in previously hostile areas, such as the ex-Soviet Caucasus and Central Asia, new diplomatic relationships are being eased by the U.S. military’s training of border guards and security services. In other places, as in Chile a decade ago, the resumption of a bilateral military relationship with the United States cements a successful democratic transition.

The much larger truth is that the very distinction between our civilian and military operations overseas is eroding. In 1994 two Special Forces officers helped the Paraguayan government to craft new laws just after Paraguay’s constitution was adopted. The U.S. military will increasingly churn out such chameleons: operatives who combine the traits of soldier, intelligence agent, diplomat, civilian aid worker, and academic. And at the same time that our uniformed officers are acting more like diplomats, our diplomats, particularly our ambassadors, are acting more like generals. It is under the State Department’s auspices, not the Pentagon’s, that helicopters are leased to the Colombian army to fight narcoterrorists and that a campaign is waged to track small planes suspected of transporting cocaine in the Colombia-Peru-Ecuador region. America’s war against narcoterrorists in Colombia has two overseers: General James T. Hill, head of Southern Command, and Anne Patterson, the ambassador to Colombia.

The model for our future diplomats might be Deane Hinton, who oversaw the counterinsurgency operation as the ambassador to El Salvador in the early 1980s and then oversaw U.S. efforts to arm Afghan guerrillas as the ambassador to Pakistan from 1983 to 1987. In both those cases a military strategy would have been unavailing in the absence of a successful “interagency” strategy, which backed diplomatic initiatives and humanitarian aid packages with the power of a cocked gun. The same will be true in Colom-

bia and in al Qaeda-infested Yemen. At the moment "inter-agency" is a dirty word among many in the field, connoting overlapping bureaucracies with conflicting agendas. But a supple and flexible civilian-military chain of command is an immensely useful tool.

Of course, in violent and chaotic parts of the world such as Afghanistan and Yemen, it is only natural that the soldier will at first be more conspicuous than the Peace Corps worker. Because parts of Yemen have become too dangerous for American civilians, the U.S. military is training the Yemeni military to better project power in the tribal badlands, so that, among other things, our foreign-aid personnel can return there. In Central and South America the U.S. military regularly vaccinates farm animals and treats them for diseases, and the villagers are not less grateful than they would be if the help came from civilians. The same was true with Mongolians treated by a four-person Air Force dental mission dispatched recently by Pacific Command to the Mongolian-Chinese border. The Air Force officers treated eighty-five local inhabitants the day I was there, and also handed out toys to the children. It is the efficacy of a humanitarian mission that morally sanctifies it; not whether it is carried out by civilians or soldiers. And if it serves U.S. interests as this one did—so much the better.

RULE NO. 5

BE LIGHT AND LETHAL

Economy of force—doing the most with the least—has been an imperative of the U.S. military, diplomatic, and intelligence communities since the beginning of the Cold War. It will become even more important as our resources are stretched. Here we can learn a great deal from the history of U.S. policy in Latin America over the past several decades: although many journalists and intellectuals have regarded this policy as something to be ashamed of, the far more significant, operational truth is that it exemplifies how we should act worldwide in the foreseeable future.

With Europe the principal Cold War battleground, and Asia the secondary front because of the threat posed by Communist China and North Korea, Latin America took a back seat for decades. The U.S. military had to make do with limited resources while operating in a vast continent. It succeeded thanks to unconventional warfare, which helped the host governments do the real work. In practice that meant aggressive intelligence operations and Special Forces training of local units, combined with domineering diplomacy.

The results were not always pretty and, frankly, not always moral—consider what occurred in Chile in the aftermath of the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende Gossens. Yet for a relatively small investment of money and manpower the United States defeated a belligerent Soviet and Cuban campaign at its back door while paving the way for the democratic transitions and market liberalizations of the

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

SAFE HAVEN/SAFE PASSAGE (Panama, 1994–1995)

Evacuation of Cuban migrants to Guantánamo Naval Base.

UPHOLD DEMOCRACY/RESTORE DEMOCRACY (Haiti,

1994–1995) Troop movement after military coup.

VIGILANT WARRIOR (Kuwait, 1994) Training exercise to

demonstrate U.S. military presence after Iraqi troop movement.

SELVA VERDE (Colombia, 1995–present) Joint counter-drug

operation, primarily to destroy secret laboratories.

GATEKEEPER/HOLD-THE-LINE/SAFEGUARD

(U.S.A., 1995–present) Border-control operations.

UNITED SHIELD (Somalia, 1995) Military support for

withdrawal of UN peacekeeping troops.

SAFE BORDER (Ecuador/Peru, 1995–1999) Military support for

border demilitarization.

QUICK LIFT (Croatia, 1995–1996) Airlift of troops and supplies

to UN mission in the former Yugoslavia.

NOMAD VIGIL (Albania, 1995–1996) Surveillance for NATO

operations in the former Yugoslavia.

MARATHON PACIFIC/PROMPT RETURN 95 (Wake Island,

Oceania, 1995) Repatriation of a boatload of Chinese migrants.

DETERMINED EFFORT (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1995)

Prelude to peacekeeping mission Operation Joint Endeavor.

DELIBERATE FORCE (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1995) NATO air

strikes against Serb forces.

VIGILANT SENTINEL/VIGILANT WARRIOR II (Kuwait,

1995–1997) Deployment of additional U.S. soldiers to Kuwait to monitor Iraqi force movements.

ZORRO II (Mexico, 1995–1996) Counter-drug operation.

INTRINSIC ACTION (Kuwait, 1995–1999) Joint exercises with

the Kuwaiti military.

DECISIVE ENHANCEMENT (Adriatic Sea, 1995–1996) Naval

operation to enforce UN sanctions on the former Yugoslavia.

JOINT ENDEAVOR/DECISIVE ENDEAVOR (Bosnia and

Herzegovina, 1995–1996) Multinational peacekeeping mission.

DECISIVE EDGE (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1996) Enforcement

of no-fly zone.

NOMAD ENDEAVOR (Hungary, 1996–present) Surveillance of

Bosnian peacekeeping operations.

ASSURED RESPONSE (Liberia, 1996) Evacuation of U.S.

citizens and others during civil war.

LASER STRIKE (Colombia/Bolivia/Peru/Ecuador/Venezuela/

Brazil, 1996–present) Broad counter-drug operation.

QUICK RESPONSE (Central African Republic, 1996) Evacuation

of U.S. citizens and others.

DESERT FOCUS (Saudi Arabia, 1996) Relocation of U.S. troops

after a terrorist bombing at Khobar Towers.

DESERT STRIKE (Iraq, 1996) Cruise-missile attack in response

to Iraqi troop movements into Kurdish region.

PACIFIC HAVEN/QUICK TRANSIT (Iraq, 1996) Evacuation of

pro-U.S. Kurds to Guam following Kurdish infighting.

(list continues on page 79)

1980s and 1990s. Our “quiet professionals” helped to hunt down and kill the hemispheric agitator Ernesto “Che” Guevara in Bolivia in 1967. Fifty-five Special Forces trainers in El Salvador accomplished more than did 550,000 soldiers in Vietnam. A four-member Special Forces “mobile training team” convinced the Salvadoran police that rather than shooting leftist demonstrators at rallies, they should provide escape routes for the protesters to run away. That turned out to be the most effective kind of human-rights policy.

Economy of force in Latin America produced regimes that in almost every case were better than what the Cubans and the Russians offered. Even in Chile, despite the iniquities of the dictator Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, who took power following Allende’s overthrow, the military regime lowered the infant mortality rate from seventy-nine to eleven per 1,000 births and reduced the poverty rate from 30 percent to 11 percent. Privatization gave post-Allende Chile Latin America’s only economy comparable to those of the “Asian tigers.” America’s no-frills molding of political reality in the Western Hemisphere did not require the approval of the UN Security Council, and it did not run the risk of quagmire. There were usually few Americans on the ground in any one Latin country.

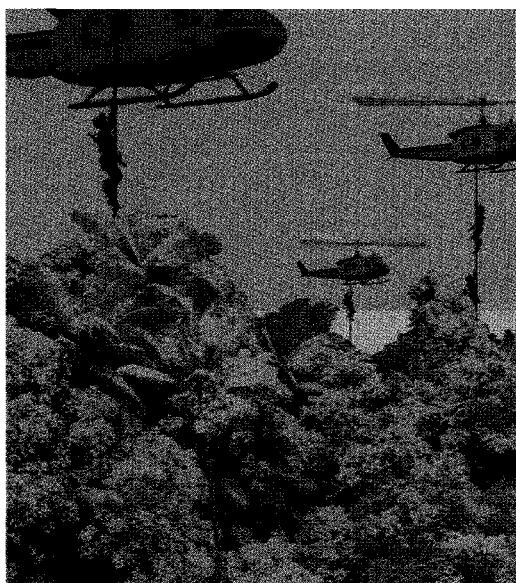
Economy of force offers a logic appropriate to an intractable world. Becoming implanted in more than a handful of countries at once spells disaster. And everyone—humanitarian interventionists included—now admits that nation-building, whether in Bosnia, Afghanistan, or Colombia, is fraught with danger, difficulty, and great expense. We shouldn’t try to fix a whole society; rather, we should identify a few key elements in it, and fix them.

For example: Because a national army is essentially unreformable without wholesale social and cultural change, we should work to improve only its elite units, using trainers from the U.S. military elite. When it comes to military operations, specialized units should concentrate on the most critical targets; in Colombia, for instance, these would be the 150 or so hydrochloride laboratories throughout Colombia that refine cocaine into its final form. And because individual leaders affect history as much as large social forces do, our efforts should be invested primarily where current leaders seem particularly talented and determined. (Alvaro Uribe Vélez, the President of Colombia, is by all accounts a dynamic workaholic, however embattled, committed both to protecting human rights and to eliminating rogue forces. Were Andrés Pastrana, Uribe’s less forceful

predecessor, still Colombia’s leader, it is doubtful that the United States would be making quite the effort it is in a place like Arauca.)

The most obvious tool to carry out an economy-of-force strategy is the Special Forces, which, as Lieutenant Colonel Kevin A. Christie told me, can perform the military equivalent of “arthroscopic surgery.” Relatively small numbers of Special Forces and Marines can maximize U.S. influence in a large number of countries without risking what the Yale historian Paul Kennedy has called imperial “overstretch.” Nevertheless, we shouldn’t get carried away. A big increase in the number and use of Special Forces could make them less special, and therefore less effective.

A less obvious resource is the Coast Guard, which handles most anti-terrorism and drug-interdiction efforts at sea. Even in the jet-and-information age 70 percent of intercontinental cargo travels by ship, making the seas as strategic as ever. The U.S. Coast Guard, with 38,000 in its active ranks, is the world’s seventh largest navy. In Colombia, which has more miles of navigable river than of passable roadway, the Coast Guard has been essential in drug-patrol training. In Yemen, Bob Innes, a retired Coast Guard captain who worked for many years in Colombia, is building a coast guard to prevent more al Qaeda attacks on oil tankers. Our strategy in Colombia and Yemen is unspoken but simple: establish not a totally reformed military but a self-sustaining structure of a few specialized units. That’s the best we will be able to do, and it will not require a heavy American military presence.



The ultimate in economy of force is the “one-man mission,” in which a single officer is attached to a foreign army, often at a remote base, to train and advise it. Because there are usually no other Americans around, the officer cannot escape from the local environment, even when he is off duty. Thus he rapidly acquires a hands-on knowledge of the terrain and its inhabitants, making him an intelligence asset for years to come. The military should consider making more use of such missions.

RULE NO. 6

BRING BACK THE OLD RULES

I refer to the pre-Vietnam War rules by which small groups of quiet professionals would be used to help stabilize or destabilize a regime, depending on the circumstances and our needs. Covert means are more discreet and cheaper than declared war and large-scale mobilization, and in an age when an industrial economy is no longer nec-

essary for the production of weapons of mass destruction, the American public, burdened with large government deficits, will demand an extraordinary degree of protection for as few tax dollars as possible. Impending technologies, such as bullets that can be directed at specific targets the way larger warheads are today, and satellites that can track the neurobiological signatures of individuals, will make assassinations far more feasible, enabling the United States to kill rulers like Saddam Hussein without having to harm their subject populations through conventional combat.

As for international law, it has meaning only when war is a distinct and separate condition from peace. As war grows more unconventional, more often undeclared, and more asymmetrical, with the element of surprise becoming the dominant variable, there will be less and less time for democratic consultation, whether with Congress or with the UN. Instead civilian-military elites in Washington and elsewhere will need to make lightning-quick decisions. In such circumstances the sanction of the so-called international community may gradually lose relevance, even if everyone soberly declares otherwise.

Bringing back the old rules would help to circumvent the UN Security Council, which in any case represents an antiquated power arrangement unreflective of the latest wave of U.S. military modernization in both tactics and weaponry. In the future we should attempt to manage most problems long before they get to the Security Council, by increasingly emphasizing Special Forces and an intelligence service bolstered by its own military wing—an emphasis we applied successfully in Afghanistan. Of course, the CIA's military wing will never be large enough to do everything. Thus the CIA and the Special Forces need to coordinate their efforts more closely, under "black," or super-clandestine, rules of engagement. Not only should the CIA be *greener* (that is, have a larger uniformed military wing), but the Special Forces should be *blacker*.

To be sure, such clandestine methods might not be enough to change a regime like Iraq's. But that kind of regime is exceedingly rare; the diplomatic farce at the UN a few months back, with France and Germany working indefatigably to contain the power of a democratic United States rather than that of a Stalinist, weapons-hungry Iraq, need not be repeated.

As shocking as some of the above may sound, much of what I advocate is already taking place. The old rules, with their accent on discretion, were on the way back even before 9/11. Witness the increasing use of security-consulting firms and defense contractors that employ—in places as diverse as South America, the Caucasus, and West Africa—retired members of the U.S. military to conduct aerial surveillance, to train local armies, and to help struggling friendly regimes. Consider Military Professional Resources, Inc. (MPRI), of northern Virginia, which during the mid-1990s restructured and modernized the Croatian military. Shortly

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

GUARDIAN ASSISTANCE (Zaire/Rwanda, 1996) Navy air surveillance of Rwandan refugee movement.

DETERMINED GUARD (Adriatic Sea, 1996–present) Naval operation to enforce UN sanctions on the former Yugoslavia.

JOINT GUARD (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1996–1998) Residual presence after Operation Joint Endeavor.

DECISIVE GUARD/DELIBERATE GUARD (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1996–1998) Enforcement of no-fly zone.

NORTHERN WATCH (Iraq, 1997–2003) Enforcement of no-fly zone, a joint effort with Turkey and the UK.

NEW HORIZONS (Honduras/Jamaica/Belize/the Caribbean, 1997–present) Humanitarian building-and-training project.

ASSURED LIFT (Liberia, 1997) Airlift of West African peacekeeping forces to Liberia.

PRESENT HAVEN (Cuba, 1997) Security mission involving migrant populations at Guantánamo Bay.

SILVER WAKE (Albania, 1997) Evacuation of American citizens and others.

GUARDIAN RETRIEVAL (Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1997) Evacuation of U.S. citizens.

NOBLE OBELISK (Sierra Leone, 1997) Evacuation of U.S. citizens and others.

BEVEL EDGE (Cambodia, 1997) Evacuation program during civil war, never fully implemented.

SILENT ASSURANCE (Qatar, 1997) Security operation during the Middle East/North Africa Economic Conference.

PHOENIX SCORPION I–IV (Iraq, 1997–1998) Air and logistical support for operations in the Persian Gulf.

PLAN COLOMBIA (Colombia, 1998–present) Military equipment and training for Colombian counter-drug forces.

NOBLE RESPONSE (Kenya, 1998) Humanitarian effort after heavy rains and flooding.

SOLAR SUNRISE (U.S.A., 1998) Security response to attacks on Defense Department computer networks.

DESERT THUNDER (Iraq, 1998) Military buildup during talks between the UN and Iraq over weapons of mass destruction.

DELIBERATE FORGE (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1998–present) NATO air operation supporting security forces.

DETERMINED FALCON (former Yugoslavia, 1998) NATO air-power demonstration.

JOINT FORGE (Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1998–present) Residual NATO presence after Operation Joint Guard.

SHEPHERD VENTURE (Guinea-Bissau, 1998) Deployment to support evacuation of U.S. citizens.

RESOLUTE RESPONSE (Kenya, 1998–present) Marine security at the temporary American embassy.

INFINITE REACH (Afghanistan/Sudan, 1998) Cruise-missile strikes against terrorist targets.

(list continues on page 81)

afterward Croatian battlefield success against the Serbs forced Belgrade to the peace table.

Encouraging an overall moral outcome to the Yugoslav conflict involved methods that were not always defensible in narrowly moral terms; the Croats, too, were murderers. And moral ambiguity is even greater in protracted wars, such as the Cold War and the war on terrorism, in which deals will always have to be struck with bad people and bad regimes for the sake of a larger good. The war on terrorism will not be successful if every aspect of its execution must be disclosed and justified—in terms of universal principles—to the satisfaction of the world media and world public opinion. The old rules are good rules because, as the ancient Chinese philosophers well knew, deception and occasional dirty work are morally preferable to launching a war.

RULE NO. 7

REMEMBER THE PHILIPPINES

The first large-scale encounter between the U.S. military and a guerrilla insurgency came as the United States tried to consolidate control over the Philippine archipelago, a former colony of Spain, after our victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898. Unfortunately, many of the lessons our military learned from that encounter were for a long time ignored, because the military's performance in one dimension was overshadowed by allegations involving another. As Brian McAllister Linn wrote in his dense and masterly book *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899–1902* (1989), some charges of American brutality against Filipino civilians were certainly justified, and without question the brutality drew press attention that colors the episode still. Brutality is always inexcusable—but in this instance it was hardly the whole story. Max Boot concludes in *The Savage Wars of Peace* (2002) that U.S. actions in the Philippines constitute “one of the most successful counter-insurgencies waged by a Western army in modern times.” Given the challenges ahead, our experience a century ago in the anarchic Philippines may be more relevant than our recent experience in Iraq.

Modern communications, which seem to unify the world to some degree, often foster the illusion that policies can be one-size-fits-all. Mid-level commanders in the Philippines, however, lacking helicopters and radios, were forced to become policymakers in their own patch of jungle. That was a good thing, and it promoted skills that we need more of: in a rugged topography given over to anarchy—which describes much of the world today—the political, military, and cultural situation is going to vary from micro-region to micro-region. The commanders in the Philippines who were particularly successful emphasized small, mobile units; developed native intelligence sources; and gained information by interrogating captured guerrillas. In some parts of the archipelago the United States was able to exploit ethnic divisions; in other parts it was foolish even to try. In some

parts a purely military strategy was called for; in others a civil-affairs and humanitarian-aid component was an absolute necessity. Nevertheless, as Linn observed,

It was only when the Army could separate the guerrillas from the civilians and prevent the guerrillas from disrupting civil organization that social reform was possible. Officers in the Philippines, no matter how benevolent their intentions, realized that the military objective, the defeat of the guerrillas, was the most essential of their tasks.

In other words, in areas still not pacified by our troops, it is perfectly appropriate to see more soldiers than aid workers. But those soldiers, as William Howard Taft (then the head of the Philippine Commission) and Brigadier General Frederick Funston both observed, should be led by field officers of exceptional character, with hands-on area expertise.

RULE NO. 8

THE MISSION IS EVERYTHING

No mission should ever be compromised by diplomatic punctilio. That sounds obvious, and at the same time is often impossible to implement. But here is what happens when this rule is broken.

In the late 1990s Nigerian soldiers deputized by the international community were in Sierra Leone, not only to keep the peace but also, if truth be told, in some cases to steal alluvial diamonds. Like other African peacekeeping contingents in Sierra Leone, the Nigerians weren't always paid by their own government, even though the government was getting money from the international community to provide peacekeeping. Some of these contingents were openly incompetent; the Zambians, for instance, were a battalion of mechanics, cooks, and clerks. But the United Nations said little about any of this; instead it officially accepted the obvious falsehood that all national armies are roughly equal. Diplomatic nicety had completely compromised the mission. The result: the peacekeeping effort nearly collapsed as demoralized and incompetent peacekeepers surrendered without a fight to murderous teenage paramilitaries, who closed in on the capital of Freetown. Order was restored only after the British government dispatched commandos to Sierra Leone. Mounted on rooftops at the airport, a contingent of those commandos shot and killed any rebel who emerged from the bush. For the British, only the mission mattered.

When Hans Blix, the chief UN weapons inspector, demonstrated little enthusiasm for bringing Iraqi scientists and their families out of Iraq (even though other Iraqi scientists, once outside their country, had in the past provided valuable intelligence to the West) he revealed that for the UN, yet again, the mission was not everything.

Unfortunately, for the United States the mission is not always everything either. It is often hamstrung by diplomacy and domestic public opinion. The Special Forces are allowed to train and advise local counterparts, but because

of restrictions imposed by the United States and, often, the host country as well, they typically have to wave good-bye when local troops take to the field to fight. This can be demoralizing to our elite units, whose members are not draftees serving out their time but professional warriors prepared daily to take measured risks—risks that may seem incredible to timid politicians and other outsiders. And when host-country soldiers are wounded, we should not be prohibited from helping them get to our field clinics, as is sometimes the case. Our elite units should be allowed to provide air cover for local allies, and to help direct operations on the ground. There are no such limits in Afghanistan; ideally that would be the case everywhere. Successful imperial militaries have traditionally fought alongside indigenous troops.

Moreover, arbitrary troop limits set by Congress, known as “force caps,” which have restricted Green Beret trainers to fifty-five in El Salvador and our troops in Colombia to 400, should be more flexible. Also, embassy Marines and Army support staff should not be part of the calculation; force caps should apply only to the advisers and training teams in the field. Every one of our Green Berets is a force multiplier, to the extent that an extra ten or twenty of them could make an exponential difference in the success of a mission. If a cap needs stretching a bit, the U.S. ambassador and the U.S. military commander in the host country should be able to stretch it on their own. To think that any of this would risk another Vietnam is alarmist.

Compromising the mission, moreover, can mean needlessly compromising our soldiers’ safety. Since the destruction of the Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, and of military apartments at Khobar Towers, in Saudi Arabia, in 1996, our generals and politicians have needed a commandment: Thou shalt not be sitting ducks. U.S. troops should never be concentrated in a place where they cannot aggressively patrol the surrounding area. Yet that was the situation I observed near the town of Saravena, in northeastern Colombia: because the rules of engagement set by our policymakers and the Colombian government did not allow for aggressive patrolling, a few dozen Green Berets and their support staff were concentrated there in barracks vulnerable to a possible attack by cylinder bombs. That may be politically sound, but it is tactically dumb. And it is morally wrong, because it denies our warriors the means of self-defense. In Saravena the mission was not everything.

RULE NO. 9

FIGHT ON EVERY FRONT

In their recent article “An Emerging Synthesis for a New Way of War,” published in the *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Air Force Colonels James Callard and Peter Faber describe what they call “combination warfare”—a concept derived from a 1999 Chinese text by two colonels in the People’s Liberation Army, Qiao

U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

FUERTE APOYO (STRONG SUPPORT) (Honduras/Guatemala/Nicaragua/El Salvador, 1998–1999) Hurricane Mitch relief effort.

DETERMINED FORCE/COBALT FLASH (Kosovo/Serbia, 1998–1999) NATO military buildup for possible air strikes.

EAGLE EYE (Kosovo, 1998–1999) NATO air surveillance.

PROVIDE HOPE V (former Soviet Union, 1998–1999) Ongoing humanitarian operation to former Soviet republics.

SHINING PRESENCE (Israel, 1998) Troops and Patriot missile batteries dispatched to Israel for its defense.

DESERT FOX (Iraq, 1998) Cruise-missile attacks against Iraq.

ALLIED FORCE/NOBLE ANVIL (Kosovo/Serbia, 1999) NATO air strikes against Serbian forces.

SUSTAIN HOPE/PROVIDE REFUGE/OPEN ARMS (former Yugoslavia, 1999) Humanitarian mission to Kosovar-Albanian refugees in Europe and airlift of others to host families in U.S.

ALLIED HARBOUR/SHINING HOPE (former Yugoslavia, 1999) NATO humanitarian mission to Kosovar-Albanian refugees.

AVID RESPONSE (Turkey, 1999) Humanitarian effort after a severe earthquake.

STABILIZE (East Timor, 1999) Multinational effort to restore order following an independence referendum.

DESERT SPRING (Kuwait, 1999–present) Rotating presence to protect U.S. Army forces and to train the Kuwaiti military.

FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSE (Venezuela, 1999–2000) Humanitarian effort after heavy rains and flooding.

DESERT SHIFT (Saudi Arabia, 2000–2001) Establishment of regional headquarters for U.S. air forces at Prince Sultan Air Base.

SILENT PROMISE/ATLAS RESPONSE (Mozambique/South Africa, 2000) Humanitarian effort after heavy rains and flooding.

DETERMINED RESPONSE (Yemen, 2000) Operational response after terrorist attack on the destroyer USS *Cole*.

NOBLE EAGLE (U.S.A., 2001–present) Partial mobilization of reserves for national-defense and civil-support missions.

BORDER SUPPORT (U.S.A., 2001–present) Mobilization of National Guard soldiers to secure U.S. borders.

ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan/global, 2001–present) U.S. invasion of Afghanistan to remove the Taliban regime and to destroy al Qaeda’s base of operations.

FOCUS RELIEF (Ghana/Senegal, 2001) Training and equipping of West African forces for peacekeeping in Sierra Leone.

ESSENTIAL HARVEST (Macedonia, 2001) NATO collection of arms and ammunition from members of the ethnic-Albanian National Liberation Army.

ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR (Mediterranean Sea, 2001–present) NATO naval operation to monitor the eastern Mediterranean as a show of post-9/11 solidarity.

GEORGIA TRAIN AND EQUIP PROGRAM (Georgia, 2002–present) Assistance to security and counterterrorist forces.

PHILIPPINE INTEROPERABILITY EXCHANGE (Philippines, 2003) Joint Marine training exercise.

IRAQI FREEDOM (Iraq, 2003) Invasion of Iraq.

Liang and Wang Xiangsui. In the twenty-first century a single conflict may include not only traditional military activity but also financial warfare, trade warfare, resource warfare, legal warfare, and so on. The authors explain that it may eventually involve even ecological warfare (the manipulation of the heretofore “natural” world, altering the climate). Because combination warfare draws on all spheres of human activity, it is the ultimate in total war. It “seeks to overwhelm others by assaulting them in as many domains ... as possible,” Callard and Faber write. “It creates sustained, and possibly shifting, pressure that is hard to anticipate.”

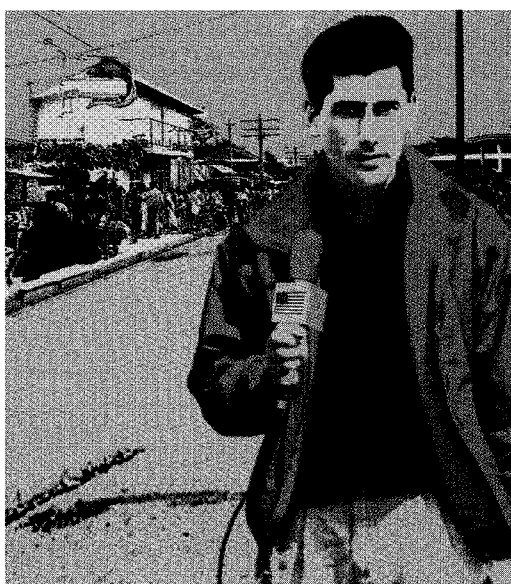
Combination warfare has already begun, though it has yet to be codified in military doctrine. The most important front, in a way, may be the media. Like the priests of ancient Egypt, the rhetoricians of ancient Greece and Rome, and the theologians of medieval Europe, the media constitute a burgeoning class of bright and ambitious people whose social and economic stature can have the effect of undermining political authority. The media increasingly, and dramatically, affect policy yet bear no responsibility for the outcome.

In terms of U.S. national interests, media attitudes have gotten both worse and better in recent years. American leaders deal less and less with strictly American media and more and more with global ones, as elite U.S. news organs increasingly make use of foreign nationals and global cosmopolitans with multiple passports. The new, global media think in terms of abstract universal principles—the traditional weapon of the weak seeking to restrain the strong—even as the primary responsibility of our policymakers must be to maintain our strength vis-à-vis China, Russia, and the rest of the world. On the other hand, it is impossible to ignore the resurgence of patriotism among American journalists; the political divide between Europe and the United States in the buildup to the war in Iraq, and during this war itself, was mirrored by a divide between the European and the U.S. media. Still, this trend may be ephemeral.

Because the consequences of attack by weapons of mass destruction are so catastrophic, the United States will periodically have no choice but to act pre-emptively on limited evidence, exposing our actions to challenge by journalists, to say nothing of millions of protesters who are increasingly able to coordinate their demonstrations worldwide. The enormous anti-war demonstrations on several continents last February revealed that life inside

the post-industrial cocoon of Western democracy has made people incapable of imagining life inside a totalitarian system. With affluence often comes not only the loss of imagination but also the loss of historical memory. Thus global economic growth in the twenty-first century can be expected to create mass societies even more deluded than the ones we have now—the very actions necessary to protect human rights and democracy will become increasingly hard to explain to those who have never been deprived of them. The masses “show no concern for the causes and reasons” behind their own well-being, observed the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset in *The Revolt of the Masses* (1929), a book that was equally prescient about the Fascist rallies of the 1930s and the youth rebellion of the 1960s. Indeed, the peace demonstrators last February appeared to have no idea whatsoever that their very freedom to demonstrate had been won by war and conquest in the service of liberty—precisely what the U.S. and British governments were proposing to do in Iraq. Of course, the masses are uninterested, as Ortega noted. “Since they do not see, behind the benefits of civilization, ... they imagine that their role is limited to demanding these benefits peremptorily, as if they were natural rights.”

A nation whose businesses can regularly sell products that people neither want nor need should be able to market a foreign policy better than it usually does. Just as leading companies harvest the best former government officials, our government will have to find the budget and the will to hire



away the best communicators for this marketing effort. We also need diplomats who are fluent in local languages and dialects and whose sole job is to appear on foreign talk shows (in the Middle East and elsewhere) and be available to local journalists for interviews, so as to better represent our point of view. This occurs too infrequently at the moment. Here, too, we desperately need more area experts; and we need more hyphenated Americans and language specialists inside government. Moreover, it is now a strategic imperative that the United States Information Agency, gutted by the Clinton Administration under pressure from Senator Jesse Helms, be reinvented.

Some may argue that an effective information strategy is largely a matter of telling and spinning the truth. But the truth needs lots of help in societies marked by mass illiteracy, where rumors and conspiracy theories are the rule rather than the exception. That is because where few of the men and almost none of the women can read, news

can be communicated only orally; thus it is even more quickly subject to distortion. In the context of mass illiteracy, the growing array of CNN-like networks in Arabic and other languages creates the conditions for a tidal wave of hysteria to be generated by a single inaccurate news report. Destructive rumors and conspiracy theories need to be countered quickly.

Indeed, the best information strategy is to avoid attention-getting confrontations in the first place and to keep the public's attention as divided as possible. We can dominate the world only quietly: off camera, so to speak. The moment the public focuses on a single crisis like the one in Iraq, that crisis is no longer analyzed on its merits: instead it becomes a rallying point around which lonely and alienated people in a global mass society can define themselves through an uplifting group identity, be it European, Muslim, anti-war intellectual, or whatever.

Nevertheless, although media coverage of the war in Iraq was unprecedented, many wars will continue to be fought with few journalists in sight, and consequently with little public awareness. Look at the Congo, where more than three million people have died in conflict since the late 1990s without any significant peace protests in the West. Military conflicts in Colombia, the Philippines, Nepal, and other places may as well be happening in secret. Our intelligence officers, backed by commando detachments, should in the future be given as much leeway as they require to get the job done, so that problems won't fester to the point where we have to act in front of a battery of television cameras.

RULE NO. 10

SPEAK VICTORIAN, THINK PAGAN

As noted, imperialism in antiquity was in many respects a strain of isolationism: the demand for absolute security at home led powers to try to dominate the world around them. That pagan-Roman model of imperialism contrasts sharply with the altruistic Victorian one, exemplified by Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone in his comment about protecting "the sanctity of life in the hill villages of Afghanistan." Americans are truly idealistic by nature, but even if we weren't, our historical and geographical circumstances would necessitate that U.S. foreign policy be robed in idealism, so as to garner public support and ultimately be effective. And yet security concerns necessarily make our foreign policy more pagan. The idealistic shorthand of "democracy," "economic development," and "human rights," by means of which the media make sense of events in distant parts of the world, conceals many harsh and complicated ground-level truths. Remember that even Gladstone's vision was more effectively implemented by the realpolitik of statesmen such as Lord Palmerston, Benjamin Disraeli, and the Marquess of Salisbury, who kept illiberal empires like Germany and Russia at bay, sometimes through

sheer deviousness, and also arranged for the retaking of Sudan from Islamic extremists.

By sustaining ourselves first, we will be able to do the world the most good. Some 200 countries, plus thousands of nongovernmental organizations, represent a chaos of interests. Without the organizing force of a great and self-interested liberal power, they are unable to advance the interests of humanity as a whole.

And there is this coda: Just as, following the explorations of Portuguese and other mariners, the oceans became a new arena for great power struggles, so will outer space. We have recognized this by creating a U.S. Space Command, which is now a part of the U.S. Strategic Command. The only question now is whether the United States will invest enough in the military technology required to dominate space. If a less liberal power such as China does so instead, then American dominance will be particularly short-lived, no matter how successful the war on terrorism.

No doubt there are some who see an American empire as the natural order of things for all time. That is not a wise outlook. The task ahead for the United States has an end point, and in all probability the end point lies not beyond the conceptual horizon but in the middle distance—a few decades from now. For a limited period the United States has the power to write the terms for international society, in hopes that when the country's imperial hour has passed, new international institutions and stable regional powers will have begun to flourish, creating a kind of civil society for the world. The historian E. H. Carr once observed that "every approach in the past to a world society has been the product of the ascendancy of a single Power." Such ascendancy allows all manner of worldwide connections—economic, cultural, institutional—to be made in a context of order and stability. There will be nothing approaching a true world government, but we may be able to nurture a loose set of global arrangements that have arisen organically among responsible and like-minded states.

If this era of reluctant imperium is to leave a lasting global mark, we must know what we are up to; we must have a sense that supremacy is bent toward a purpose and is not simply an end in itself. In many ways the few decades immediately ahead will be the trickiest ones that our policymakers have ever faced: they are charged with the job of running an empire that looks forward to its own obsolescence.

Winston Churchill saw in the United States a worthy successor to the British Empire, one that would carry on Britain's liberalizing mission. We cannot rest until something emerges that is just as estimable and concrete as what Churchill saw when he gazed across the Atlantic. ▀

Robert D. Kaplan is an Atlantic Monthly correspondent and the author of Warrior Politics: Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos (2001), Eastward to Tartary: Travels in the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus (2000), The Arabists: The Romance of an American Elite (1993), and other books.

HEADLINES OVER THE HORIZON

Analysts at the RAND Corporation lay out ten international-security developments that aren't getting the attention they deserve

THE WALL

Whenever hopes for peace between Israelis and Palestinians rise, a new surge of bloodshed extinguishes them. Palestinian suicide bombings provoke Israeli military attacks, which provoke more suicide bombings, which provoke more military attacks. Now the Israelis are trying to stop the violence by building a 225-mile wall—variously consisting of concrete, barbed wire, electronic fencing, motion detectors, and trenches—that will separate the Jewish state from the West Bank. It will be completed this year and will profoundly change the geographical and political landscape of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The wall is the most ambitious attempt by Israelis to reclaim the relative quiet they enjoyed before the second intifada, which began in September of 2000 and has since subjected Israel to a relentless wave of suicide terrorism. The logic behind the wall is unassailable. Israel's other borders (with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Gaza) are fairly well protected; none has the security problems with terrorist infiltrators that exist on the frontier with the West Bank. The Gaza Strip, for example, was a major departure point for Palestinian terrorist strikes into Israel before it was fenced off, in 1994. Since the current intifada began, no Palestinian suicide bomber has entered Israel from Gaza.

Polls show that at least 70 percent of Israelis support physical separation from the West Bank. However, many of the 200,000 Jewish settlers who live there oppose the wall, for a simple reason: once it is finished, the Israeli army will no longer provide the level of protection settlers currently enjoy. Few settlers are likely to want to remain outside the wall, given their increased vulnerability to attack; most will probably move back to Israel. Thus the wall could spell the

death of the attempt to settle Greater Israel, which encompasses the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria and includes the West Bank. It will also create a de facto international border.

The idea of the wall also makes many Palestinians unhappy, because it will not exactly follow the Green Line—Israel's pre-1967 border with the West Bank. Instead it will reach into the West Bank to embrace some nearby Jewish settlements. Palestinians consider this a land grab. In addition, the wall will further weaken the already severely damaged Palestinian economy in the short run, since entry into Israel will be more difficult. As Palestinians are forced to turn elsewhere for jobs and income, however, the impetus for a more self-reliant and robust Palestinian economy could emerge.

But the wall could also deepen Palestinian rage and enmity, of course, prompting escalated mortar and ground-to-ground missile attacks against targets inside Israel. Hamas has already launched such attacks from the Gaza Strip, and it may now do so from the West Bank. The wall could also prompt further attacks on Israelis overseas, like the suicide bombing last November of a Mombasa hotel filled with Israeli tourists and the accompanying attempt to shoot down an Israeli chartered plane. —BRUCE HOFFMAN

A SHRINKING RUSSIA

The population of Russia is getting smaller and older. In 1992 the country's population was estimated at 148 million; today the number is 145 million. That's an absolute decline greater than that in any other nation during the past decade—and some analysts predict that the number of people in Russia will drop below 100 million by 2050. The number of Russians aged fifteen to twenty-four, though temporarily growing because of high birth

rates in the 1980s, may shrink by nearly half over the next fifteen years, because of low birth rates in the 1990s. This will greatly strain a country that is already struggling to cope with a daunting array of security challenges, including controlling the world's longest borders and largest land mass, maintaining the world's largest nuclear arsenal, and reining in one of the world's most serious weapons-proliferation problems.

The security implications of this demographic change become clear when one examines its effect on Russia's military, police, border guards, and other security forces, which in coming years won't be able to fill their ranks. And more is at issue than a simple decline in numbers. Young Russian men, the population from which the military and other security agencies draw most of their personnel, are today plagued with health problems, among them alcoholism (a long-standing problem), tuberculosis (a returning scourge), and HIV/AIDS (a rapidly emerging new epidemic). The mortality rate among Russian men aged fifteen to twenty-four nearly doubled in the 1990s and is now almost three times that among American men of the same age. The rate of death from suicide, one of the leading killers of young Russian men today, is more than three times that for young American men. And many young Russians who are fit for (ostensibly compulsory) military service bribe their way out of it, leaving a force even less healthy than the military-age population as a whole.

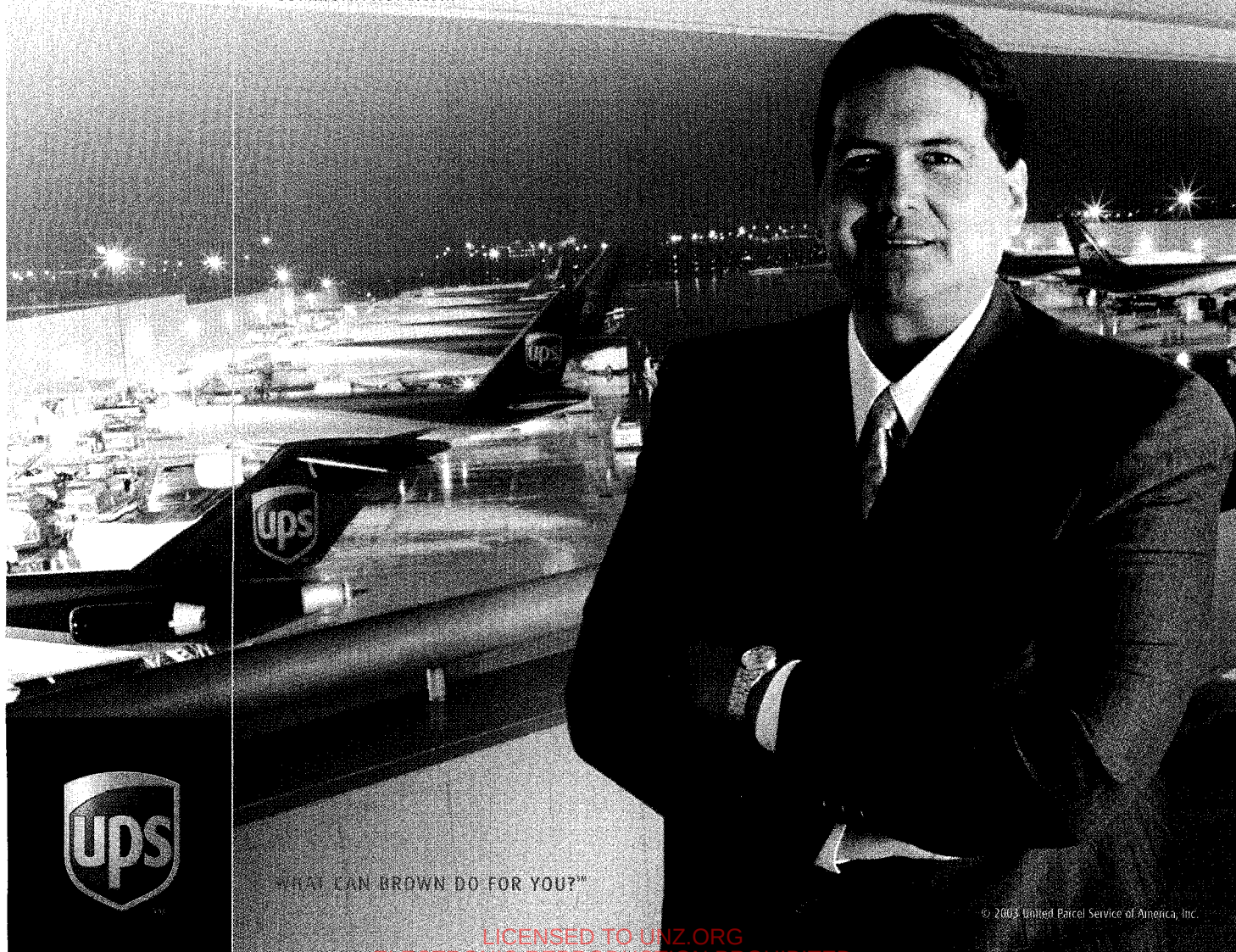
Unlike many European states that also have shrinking populations of young people, Russia isn't currently in a position to compensate for a loss of manpower by putting more money or technology into its military and other security organs, because the country's economy and scientific sectors have suffered considerably during the past

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decade. And as the country's population ages, burgeoning pension obligations will drain away resources that could otherwise have been devoted to security. Although immigration might mitigate some of the population loss and help to fill the ranks, the trend is not encouraging: immigration has plummeted from more than 1.2 million in 1994 to fewer than 185,000 in 2002. Russia could try to expand its military ranks, at least, by relying more on women soldiers, but the military's attitude toward women is hostile in many ways, and cultural adjustments simply will not come quickly.

Without enough manpower to police its extensive borders and to respond effectively to internal and external security problems, Russia could well lose its battles against smuggling, terrorism, and weapons proliferation—all threats that pose dangers far beyond Russia's borders. —JULIE DAVANZO, OLGA OLKER, & CLIFFORD GRAMMICH

THE HINDU-MUSLIM DIVIDE

Defining element of Indian politics since independence has been a commitment to secularism. That commitment is now at risk from an aggressive brand of Hindu nationalism that equates Indian national identity with Hindu religious identity. The country's radical nationalists view the secular political system as a threat to Hindu identity, largely because of the power it offers India's 140 million Muslims. Weakening, or even abolishing, the secular state has therefore become part of the radical-nationalist agenda. This may force Indian Muslims—traditionally moderate and supportive of the secular state, even on the sensitive matter of Kashmir—to shift their allegiance from the state to some sort of larger international Islamic movement, as many Muslims have done in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Such a radicalization of religious identities is a matter of serious concern in a nation of a billion people that possesses the world's seventh largest nuclear arsenal and has had troubled relations with its populous and nuclear-armed Muslim neighbor, Pakistan.

Radical Hindu nationalism is already a dominant force in mainstream

Indian politics. A Hindu nationalist party, the BJP, has led the country's coalition government for five years, and extremist Hindu organizations with explicitly anti-Muslim sentiments have heavily influenced the party's agenda. Strife between Hindus and Muslims has been the predictable result. Last year a group of Muslims burned a train full of nationalist Hindus in the state of Gujarat; the attack killed fifty-eight people and led to Hindu reprisals that killed about 2,000 Muslims. An Indian tribunal investigating the massacres found that Hindu nationalist groups had methodically targeted Muslim homes and shops. It even charged that one important group, the VHP, had recruited and trained militants for the violence, and had provided them with computer printouts of names and addresses. Local and national security forces failed to respond adequately to the crisis as it unfolded: initially the state police did not intervene, and the central government only belatedly sent troops to Gujarat to restore order. Although thousands of extremist Hindus were involved in the violence, few were arrested. On the whole, the Gujarat episode has left Indian Muslims feeling neglected by the government.

The radicalization of India's Hindus and Muslims poses obvious domestic-security challenges. According to recent reports, Muslim militants based in Kashmir have been working with Pakistani groups to target the VHP and other groups in retaliation for the massacre in Gujarat. Militant Hindu groups have vowed to destroy Muslim mosques throughout India, and to build temples in their place. —ROLLIE LAL

AIDS AND AFRICAN ARMIES

The devastating impact of the AIDS pandemic in Africa is well known. According to the United Nations, some 28 million people in sub-Saharan Africa now live with HIV/AIDS, and in some countries the rate of HIV infection approaches 40 percent of the adult population. AIDS claimed more than 900,000 lives in southern Africa during 2001, and has left more than three million children without one or both parents. The strain on Africa's social

fabric is hard to overestimate, and the problem is finally getting widespread attention—beyond just the medical community. In January of 2000 the U.S. National Intelligence Council issued its first-ever national intelligence estimate on the global impact of infectious diseases, in which the HIV/AIDS pandemic was identified as a serious threat to U.S. national security.

One little-noted aspect of this threat will become increasingly clear in the decades ahead: AIDS is decimating the ranks of African armed forces. A 2000 survey by the Civil-Military Alliance to Combat HIV and AIDS noted that by the mid-1990s several African defense ministries were reporting significant rates of HIV infection among their armed forces. Today the militaries hardest hit by HIV/AIDS infections include those of Zimbabwe (with a 50 percent infection rate), Angola (40 to 60 percent), Tanzania (15 to 30 percent), Congo-Brazzaville (10 to 25 percent), Côte d'Ivoire (10 to 20 percent), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (40 to 60 percent), Eritrea (10 percent), and Nigeria (10 to 20 percent). In South Africa the pandemic has reached biblical proportions, with HIV-infection rates in some units of the South African National Defence Force—which happens to be the biggest peacekeeping-capable military in southern Africa—reaching as high as 90 percent. The rate of HIV infection, like the rates of infection for other sexually transmitted diseases, is two to five times as prevalent in African armies as in corresponding civilian populations. And the soldiers themselves—often prone to sexual promiscuity and illicit drug use—are a major factor in the spread of the virus, both domestically and internationally. Many of the African countries with the greatest prevalence of HIV infection are engaged in conflict of one kind or another, and rape is often a tactic or a byproduct of war.

As the pandemic claims more lives, African militaries will lose the manpower they need to carry out their missions. It will deplete many armies' officer corps, leading to a loss of command capacity, and will drain defense budgets, as unprecedented resources are channeled

to the care of infected service members. The effects of the pandemic on African armed forces are already profound. In 1999, for example, when members of numerous southern African militaries came together for a peacekeeping exercise known as Operation Blue Crane, more than 30 percent of the South African participants turned out to be medically unfit for deployment, primarily because of HIV infection.

African armies are often seen as problems, not as forces for good, but in many cases only they have been able to ensure national and regional stability. Many countries, with their armies dramatically weakened by AIDS, are likely to lose control over national security, territorial integrity, and public order. —KEVIN A. O'BRIEN

THE TEHRAN-NEW DELHI AXIS

Iran, with its Islamic regime, seems a strange ally of India, a predominantly Hindu democracy. But the two nations have been overcoming past antagonisms and developing closer ties that will affect not just Southwest Asia and the Middle East but also the United States. Their new relationship could powerfully influence such important matters as the flow of energy resources, regional and worldwide efforts to combat terrorism, and political developments in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other states in Central Asia. The consequences will not always suit U.S. interests.

Before the Islamic revolution, in 1979, Iran's ties with the West greatly vexed India, which had championed the non-aligned movement. Those concerns disappeared after the revolution, of course, but were soon replaced by concerns about Iran's support of Kashmiri aspirations and its efforts to spread Islamic revolution to other Persian Gulf states. Nevertheless, after the Cold War ended, Iran and India discovered that they shared a stake in checking U.S. global power, opposing the Taliban in Afghanistan, fighting narcotics trafficking in Asia, and developing mutually beneficial energy options.

More recently New Delhi and Tehran have found common ground in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and in the preservation of Pakistan as a

functioning state (because its collapse would pose even more of a threat to India than its survival). The two have also recognized that closer ties would help each nation meet important needs of its own: for Iran, India could be a source of technical expertise, industrial goods, and foreign investment; for India, Iran could be a much needed additional source of energy and could serve as a gateway to Central Asia (which India seeks in order to develop new markets) and as a new military flank against Pakistan. In the realm of domestic politics, too, India has strong reasons for wanting improved relations with Iran. As India witnesses a surge in Hindu nationalist politics and sentiment, it needs to signal to its increasingly marginalized and disaffected Muslim population (the second largest in the world) that it has Muslim interests in mind.

The most important milestone in the development of Indo-Iranian ties came this past January, when Iran's President Mohammad Khatami visited New Delhi as the chief guest for the Indian Republic Day parade—an honor reserved for the closest friends of India. During the visit Khatami and India's Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee signed an accord that focuses on economic, scientific, and technological ties between the two countries and that also provides a framework within which to explore a defense relationship. This new relationship began to take shape in March, in a small-scale naval exercise that Indian diplomats refer to as a "port call." Meanwhile, Iran seeks to buy arms and spare parts from India, which is steadily acquiring the capacity to manufacture a wide array of Russian military hardware, and India sees Iran as a major buyer that could help to defray the costs of this manufacturing program. —C. CHRISTINE FAIR

ANTI-SATELLITE ATTACK

Within the next five years not only Russia and China but also Pakistan, North Korea, and even Iran may acquire the ability to carry out a nuclear attack against satellites. Launching such an attack would be much simpler technically than launching a nuclear attack against a distant city; only a primitive nuclear

program and basic missile technology are required. And as the importance of satellites grows, so will the destructive potential of such an attack, adding a significant new dimension to the politics of preventing nuclear war.

An anti-satellite attack could be mounted in a variety of ways, but a high-altitude nuclear detonation would create by far the most extensive effects. It would destroy satellites near the detonation point, of course; but, more significant, it would also expand and intensify the power of the Van Allen radiation belts, clouds of high-energy particles that encircle Earth. Satellites passing through the region after a nuclear attack—among them hundreds of low-orbiting communications, weather, imaging, and scientific satellites, including the International Space Station and the Hubble space telescope—would be subjected to greatly increased levels of radiation, against which civil and commercial systems are not protected. (The satellites of the Global Positioning System are not nuclear-hardened either—but they operate in higher, less vulnerable orbits.) Such radiation would progressively degrade the satellites' solar panels and onboard electronic systems, and within months, or even weeks, after a nuclear explosion every satellite orbiting at the affected altitudes—aside from a few military systems that are protected against nuclear attack—could be disabled. It would take many months for the excess radiation trapped in the Van Allen belts to dissipate.

A nuclear anti-satellite attack would do the most harm to the United States, which owns most of the more than 250 satellites that might be affected, and which depends more than any other country on space systems. Such an attack would substantially damage the U.S. and world economies (replacing the ruined satellites could cost tens of billions of dollars, in addition to the costs of losing their services) and would seriously inconvenience the U.S. military, which relies heavily on civil and commercial satellites for functions such as communications and weather forecasting. Although no nation is likely to attack satellites as a short-term military strategy (the full effects would take too

long to accumulate), someone might well consider using the tactic as a deterrent, as a coercive threat, or to strike a painful blow against the United States and its allies without the difficulties or obvious risks of attacking a target on American soil. —*KARL P. MUELLER & ELWYN D. HARRIS*

DEFENSE-INDUSTRY GOLIATHS

In recent decades so many U.S. defense contractors have merged or been taken over that a few giant companies now dominate the industry. Initially companies chose to combine forces, to cope with the increasing complexity of new technologies and weapons systems; but the trend intensified significantly after the end of the Cold War, when Washington curtailed defense procurement and formally endorsed consolidation as a way to cut costs. The Pentagon today deals with a dramatically limited number of firms to research and develop new systems for defense, and it is almost certainly not giving those firms enough work to sustain their teams of engineers and managers. The consolidation of the defense industry has been so drastic, in fact, that the U.S. military—which must now be able not only to prevail in battle but also to do so quickly and with minimum loss of life—could see its vast technological superiority erode.

Virtually all major classes of defense equipment, including surface ships, armored vehicles, and helicopters, are threatened by consolidation. But nowhere is the threat more apparent than in the case of tactical aircraft systems. In the 1950s at least eleven firms had the engineering know-how and experience to design military aircraft for the Navy and the Air Force. More than forty different designs reached the flight-test stage during that decade—an average of roughly four per company. Keen intercompany competition provided the military with a rich menu of choices and the defense industry with a wealth of design and engineering experience. Today only three American companies—Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Northrop Grumman—are capable of leading the design of a manned military

GLOBAL INSECURITY

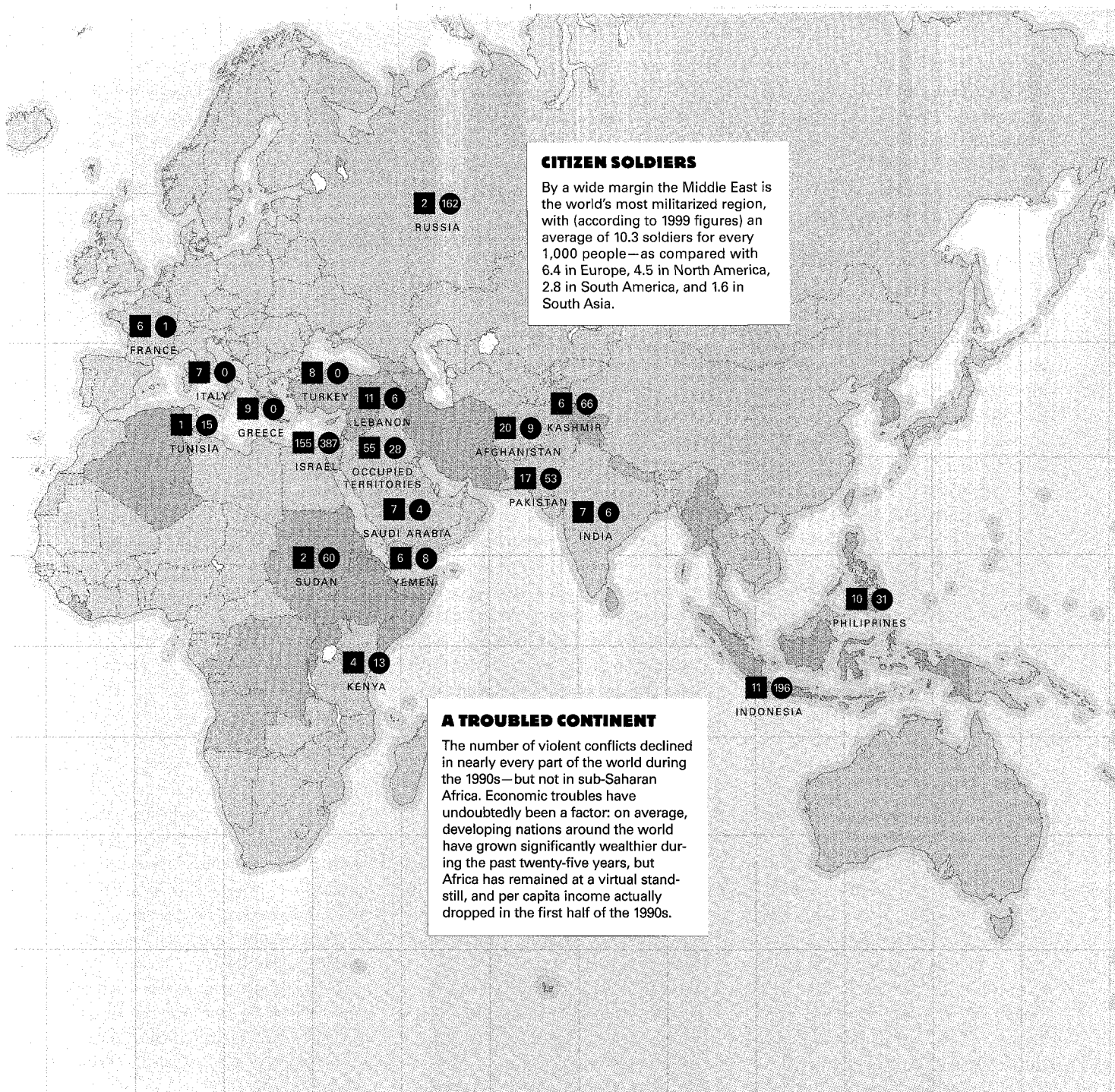
Conflicts and international terrorism worldwide



aircraft, and major contracts for which they can compete will emerge only once every other decade or so. For perhaps the first time the U.S. military is relying on only one prime contractor to design and build its new tactical fighters: Lockheed Martin, an amalgamation of more than a dozen former major aerospace companies, is developing the F-22 and the F-35. If either program runs into trouble (and few programs of comparable ambition and complexity escape it), the Pentagon's fallback options will be scarce. —*MICHAEL RICH, JOHN BIRKLER, & MARK LORELL*

THE CARRIER SHORTAGE

As the recent campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated, the United States relies more than ever on aircraft carriers to meet its military and foreign-policy objectives. The advantages of aircraft carriers are obvious: they can quickly move large air forces and their support to distant theaters of war; they can respond rapidly with tremendous firepower to changing tactical situations; they can support several missions at once, with a great number of flights per day; and deploying them in international waters requires no negotia-



SOURCES: INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES; RAND-MIPT
TERRORISM INCIDENT DATABASE/KIM CRAIG AND DOROTHY CHEN

tions with other nations. But the United States has no plans to expand its fleet of aircraft carriers, which numbers twelve, four of them dating back to the 1960s. (Current plans call for one carrier to be replaced about every four or five years during the coming several decades.) And even if the U.S. government decided tomorrow to add three carriers to the fleet, as the Navy has argued it should, more than a decade would pass before they would all be in service.

The United States has by far the largest fleet of aircraft carriers in the world; the United Kingdom operates

three carriers, and Brazil, France, India, Italy, Russia, Spain, and Thailand each operate one. But the numbers are somewhat misleading, because a carrier spends less than a third of its life in actual deployment; crew training, maintenance, and overhaul take up the rest. During the recent Iraq war only eight of the twelve U.S. carriers were deployable; five played important roles in the conflict, leaving only three available for action elsewhere. Simply keeping even those eight carriers deployable required that maintenance and crew-rotation plans be deferred—something

that can't be done indefinitely. If a nuclear standoff with North Korea had escalated to war, or if Israel, Japan, or Taiwan had required U.S. military assistance, or even if the United States had simply needed to project power into the Indian Ocean or the Philippine Sea, taking adequate action would have been difficult.

Can the United States afford a fifteen-carrier fleet? The price would be impressive: each carrier would cost around \$6 billion to build; operation and support for each one could be expected to cost several hundred million

dollars a year. But considering the international military and security challenges that the United States is likely to face in the years and decades ahead, twelve carriers may simply not be enough. —JOHN BIRKLER & JOHN SCHANK

THE INDUS WATER FIGHT

India and Pakistan have a long history of conflict: they have fought three limited territorial wars (in 1947, 1965, and 1999); a larger war (in 1971); and a protracted proxy war (since 1989) over the disputed Kashmir region. Now they are embroiled in a high-stakes dispute over water, an issue on which they had managed to cooperate for years. If it is not resolved, it could become a serious new source of conflict.

The dispute has its roots in the 1947 partition that split Pakistan from India. Pakistan received most of the western Punjab region, which was irrigated by canals that used water from the Indus River system. (The Indus River originates in western Tibet, flows through China and the Indian-held portion of Kashmir, and then turns south into Pakistan.) At the time of partition Sikh and Hindu farmers living in predominantly Muslim areas fled to the Indian-controlled eastern Punjab, which was relatively dry and had few canals; to address their water needs India began, in 1950, to build a canal system that diverted some of the flow from Pakistan. Eventually the World Bank and the United States brokered the Indus Water Treaty of 1960, which stipulated that India would control the eastern rivers of the Indus River system, with the remaining waters going to Pakistan. Both sides were satisfied with the treaty, possibly because it required little interaction, but it has come under increasing strain. Aquifers are being depleted, water tables are falling, waterways are severely polluted, and soils are becoming acutely saline from the overuse of underground water supplies. Yet both countries must not only maintain a supply of food and potable water for their populations but also develop the hydroelectric potential of the river system that runs through the borderlands.

In December of 2001, following the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament

(which precipitated an extensive Indian military buildup along the Pakistani border), India openly raised the possibility of revoking the treaty, as part of a strategy of coercive diplomacy with Pakistan. The Indian Cabinet Committee on Security identified the cutting of a major water supply as a threat to use against Pakistan. For its part, Pakistan began to argue that India had already effectively suspended the treaty that same month, when the Indian commissioner for the treaty severed all contact with his Pakistani counterpart and canceled a visit by Pakistani engineers.

Allowed to fester, the dispute over the Indus Water Treaty could fundamentally transform the Kashmir conflict, already one of the major threats to regional stability. Pakistani militants now operate in Kashmir; India has taken aggressive action against them; and demands are growing within India for a war against Pakistan to stop the proxy war. The Indus dispute may end up being the crisis that finally makes that pressure too much to contain. —C. CHRISTINE FAIR

URBAN WARFARE

Future adversaries of the United States will not want to fight battles on open terrain, where their forces and equipment will be relatively easy for American forces to find and destroy. The world's population is increasingly migrating toward ever larger cities, and finding and fighting a determined enemy in these new urban environments—characterized by dense civilian populations, complex indoor spaces, “canyons” between buildings, and subterranean mazes of sewers and other infrastructure—will be very difficult. Urban warfare is not new, of course; often it has been the hinge point of a conflict (consider Stalingrad in World War II and Mogadishu in 1993). It has always been challenging and costly. Yet we will certainly be seeing more of it.

Defense planners are now addressing this challenge, researching and developing new technologies, systems, and concepts that will render the urban battlefield as transparent as possible. One example is micro-air vehicles. Six inches wide or less, these could be carried in a soldier's backpack and

would provide real-time video information about a situation by flying over it or “perching and staring” at it; the vehicles would be controlled by handheld devices that would also receive and display the images being sent back. Researchers are also working on inexpensive micro-robot scouts that could one day carry visual, auditory, chemical, and other sensors from building to building.

Another possibility is “smart dust”—tiny, cheap electromechanical sensors that could be spread through an enemy area to collect raw data on motion, sound, heat, and magnetic fields. Such devices would use lasers, micro-mirrors, and other methods to feed a hand-held device that soldiers could consult to monitor the battlefield from afar. Under consideration, too, are robotic insects that could use flapping-wing flight to carry similar sensors into, or even collect samples from, hostile areas both indoors and out. Researchers are also looking into how information might be collected from real-life insect populations and used to map threats from chemical and biological agents. Bees, whose bodies collect airborne bacterial spores during flight, naturally search wide areas and can be examined for dangerous spores on return to their hive. Indigenous insects can also be lured and trapped to identify local environmental pathogens.

Successfully developing such systems will take years or even decades, but many have already been shown to be feasible. —EUGENE C. GRITTON & PHILIP S. ANTÓN

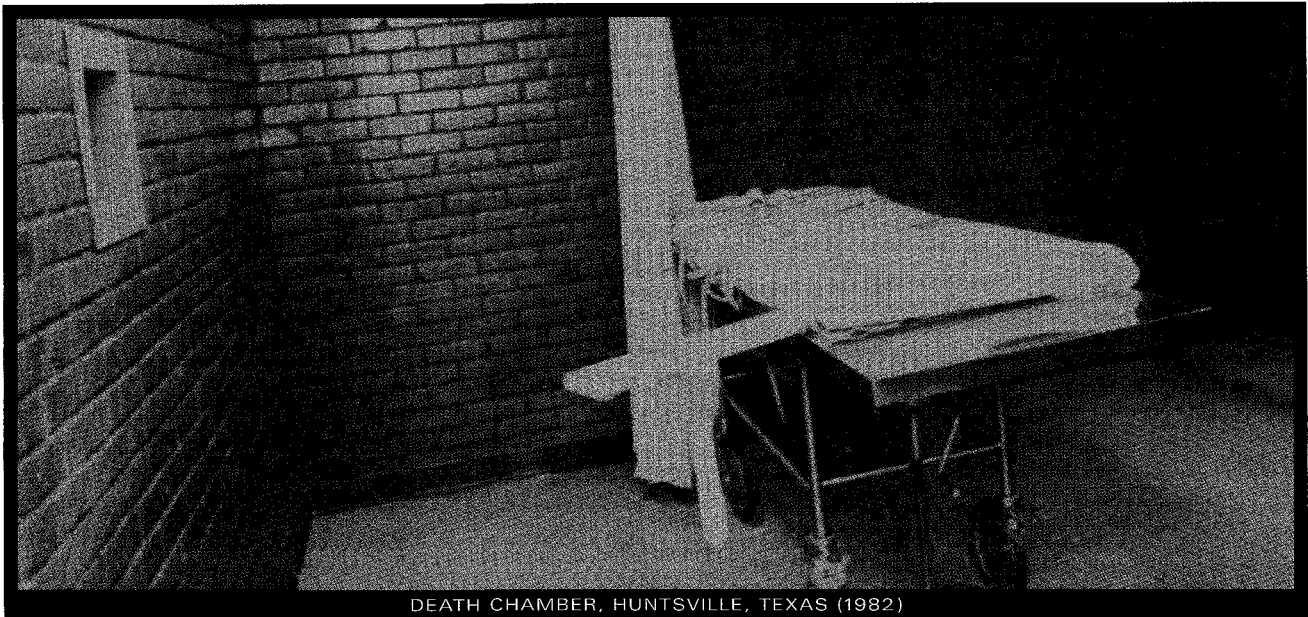
The authors are all employed by the RAND Corporation. PHILIP S. ANTÓN is a senior information scientist. JOHN BIRKLER is a senior policy analyst. JULIE DAVANZO is the director of the Population Matters project. C. CHRISTINE FAIR is an associate political scientist. CLIFFORD GRAMMICH is a member of the Research Communications Group. EUGENE C. GRITTON is the director of the Acquisition and Technology Policy Center at RAND's National Defense Research Institute. ELWYN D. HARRIS is a senior policy researcher. BRUCE HOFFMAN is the director of the Washington, D.C., office. ROLLIE LAL is an associate political scientist. MARK LORELL is a senior political scientist. KARL P. MUELLER is an associate political scientist. KEVIN A. O'BRIEN is a senior policy analyst with RAND Europe. OLGA OLIKER is an associate political scientist. MICHAEL RICH is the executive vice-president. JOHN SCHANK is a senior operations research analyst.

THE TEXAS CLEMENCY MEMOS

As the legal counsel to Texas Governor George W. Bush, Alberto R. Gonzales—now the White House counsel, and widely regarded as a likely future Supreme Court nominee—prepared fifty-seven confidential death-penalty memoranda for Bush's review. Never before discussed publicly, the memoranda suggest that Gonzales repeatedly failed to apprise Bush of some of the most salient issues in the cases at hand

BY ALAN BERLOW

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DEATH CHAMBER, HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS (1982)

On the morning of May 6, 1997, Governor George W. Bush signed his name to a confidential three-page memorandum from his legal counsel, Alberto R. Gonzales, and placed a bold black check mark next to a single word: DENY. It was the twenty-ninth time a death-row inmate's plea for clemency had been denied in the twenty-eight months since Bush had been sworn in. In this case Bush's signature led, shortly after 6:00 P.M. on the very same day, to the execution of Terry Washington, a mentally retarded thirty-three-year-old man with the communication skills of a seven-year-old.

Washington's death was barely noted by the media, and the governor's office issued no statement about it. But the execution and the three-page memo that sealed Washington's fate—along with dozens of similar memoranda prepared for Bush—speak volumes about the way the clemency process was approached both by Bush and by Gonzales, the man

most often mentioned as the President's choice for the next available seat on the Supreme Court.

During Bush's six years as governor 150 men and two women were executed in Texas—a record unmatched by any other governor in modern American history. Each time a person was sentenced to death, Bush received from his legal counsel a document summarizing the facts of the case, usually on the morning of the day scheduled for the execution, and was then briefed on those facts by his counsel; based on this information Bush allowed the execution to proceed in all cases but one. The first fifty-seven of these summaries were prepared by Gonzales, a Harvard-educated lawyer who went on to become the Texas secretary of state and a justice on the Texas supreme court. He is now the White House counsel.

Gonzales never intended his summaries to be made public. Almost all are marked CONFIDENTIAL and state, "The

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privileges claimed include, but are not limited to, claims of Attorney-Client Privilege, Attorney Work-Product Privilege, and the Internal Memorandum exception to the Texas Public Information Act.” I obtained the summaries and related documents, which have never been published, after the Texas attorney general ruled that they were not exempt from the disclosure requirements of the Public Information Act.

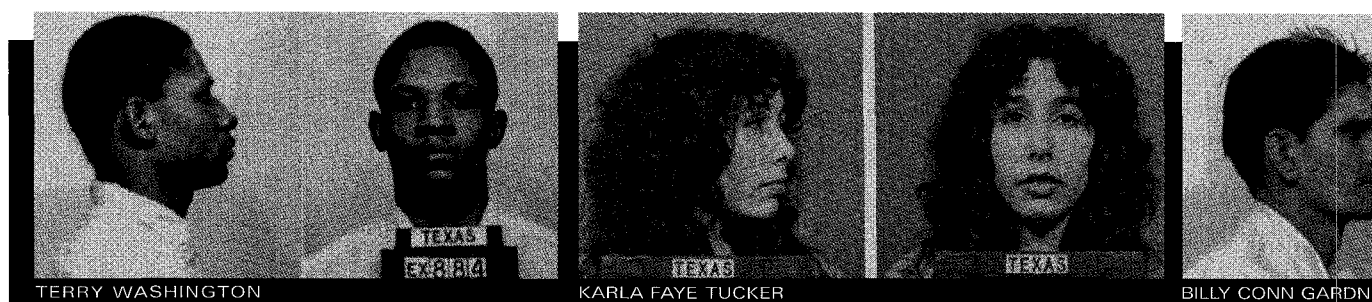
Gonzales’s summaries were Bush’s primary source of information in deciding whether someone would live or die. Each is only three to seven pages long and generally consists of little more than a brief description of the crime, a paragraph or two on the defendant’s personal background, and a condensed legal history. Although the summaries rarely make a recommendation for or against execution, many have a clear prosecutorial bias, and all seem to assume that if an appeals court rejected one or another of a defendant’s claims, there is no conceivable rationale for the governor to revisit that claim. This assumption ignores one of the most basic reasons for clemency: the fact that the justice system makes mistakes.

A close examination of the Gonzales memoranda suggests

limitations, and the fact that he and his ten siblings were regularly beaten with whips, water hoses, extension cords, wire hangers, and fan belts, were never made known to the jury, although both the district attorney and Washington’s trial lawyer knew of this potentially mitigating evidence. (Washington did not testify at his trial or his sentencing.)

Gonzales’s lack of attention to Washington’s mental retardation is particularly surprising because demand was growing nationwide to ban executions of the retarded, and because the most highly publicized case of a retarded defendant, that of Johnny Paul Penry, was even then playing itself out in Texas courts. The miscarriages in the Washington case were also precisely the kind of thing Bush claimed to want to be told about. “I don’t believe my role is to replace the verdict of a jury with my own,” he wrote in his autobiography, *A Charge to Keep* (1999), “unless there are new facts or evidence of which a jury was unaware, or evidence that the trial was somehow unfair.” Such information had indeed come to light in Washington’s case, yet Gonzales’s memorandum did not tell Bush about it.

Not only did Gonzales ignore Washington’s mental



that Governor Bush frequently approved executions based on only the most cursory briefings on the issues in dispute. In fact, in these documents Gonzales repeatedly failed to apprise the governor of crucial issues in the cases at hand: ineffective counsel, conflict of interest, mitigating evidence, even actual evidence of innocence.

The case of Terry Washington was typical. Gonzales devoted nearly a third of his three-page report on Washington to the gruesome details of the crime. He informed Bush that the victim, Beatrice Huling, was a twenty-nine-year-old restaurant manager, and wrote, “An autopsy determined she suffered 85 stab wounds, seven of which were fatal, and was eviscerated.” But the summary refers only fleetingly to the central issue in Washington’s clemency appeal—his limited mental capacity, which was never disputed by the State of Texas—and presents it as part of a discussion of “conflicting information” about the condemned man’s childhood. (The page containing this discussion is missing from the copy of the summary signed by Bush, raising the possibility that he never actually saw it before authorizing Washington’s execution.) Most important, Gonzales failed to mention that Washington’s mental

limitations, but he didn’t mention that Washington’s trial lawyer had failed to enlist a mental-health expert to testify on Washington’s behalf (although he was entitled to one under a 1985 Supreme Court ruling), which in a death-penalty case clearly suggests ineffective counsel. Nor did he mention that ineffective counsel and mental retardation were in fact the central issues raised in the thirty-page clemency petition. Gonzales noted only that the petition had been rejected by the Board of Pardons and Paroles, a body that one federal judge condemned in 1998 for its tendency to rule on clemency appeals without any investigation or discussion among its members.

Gonzales declined to be interviewed for this story, but during the 2000 presidential campaign I asked him if Bush ever read the clemency petitions of death-row inmates, and he equivocated. “I wouldn’t say that was done in every case,” he told me. “But if we felt there was something he should look at specifically—yes, he did look from time to time at what had been filed.” I have found no evidence that Gonzales ever sent Bush a clemency petition—or any document—that summarized in a concise and coherent fashion a condemned defendant’s best argument against execution in a case involving serious questions of innocence or due

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

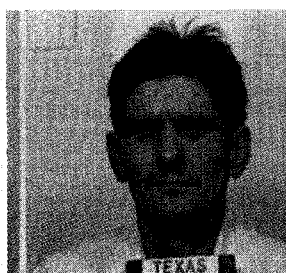
process. Bush relied on Gonzales's summaries, which never made such arguments.

Did Gonzales reserve the most important issues and documents in the Washington case for a more extensive oral briefing of the governor? Only he and Bush know. It is highly unlikely, however, given that Gonzales usually presented an execution summary to the governor on the day of an execution and that, as he has acknowledged, his briefings typically lasted no more than thirty minutes—far too little time for a serious discussion of a complex clemency plea. Bush's appointment calendar for the morning of Washington's execution shows a half-hour slot marked "Al C—Execution."

All governors claim that they agonize over death-penalty decisions. During his time in office Bush made numerous statements to this effect, among them "I take every death penalty case seriously and review each case carefully" and "Each case is major, because each case is life or death." In his autobiography he wrote, "I review every death penalty case thoroughly" and added, referring

before leaving office. Nevertheless, Bush's failure to intervene was governed as much by personal choice as by legal limitation. Had Bush wanted to commute a sentence or otherwise prevent an execution, he unquestionably could have done so. Members of the BPP are appointed by the governor to six-year rotating terms. By the end of his governorship Bush had appointed all eighteen members. If he or Gonzales had had any serious doubts about a particular case, even on the morning of a scheduled execution, Bush could easily have prevailed on the board to reconsider the matter—to conduct an investigation, hold hearings, interview witnesses, or do whatever else was necessary to resolve those doubts.

In fact, on one highly controversial occasion, in 1998, Bush intervened with the board before it had a chance to make a recommendation to him. Henry Lee Lucas had been convicted of nine other murders (for which he was serving six life sentences, two seventy-five-year sentences, and one sixty-year sentence) but had also confessed falsely to hundreds more. After the 1984 trial at which Lucas was sentenced to death, it became apparent that he hadn't even been in Texas



The memoranda suggest that Gonzales rarely delved deeply into the cases. His memo on Bruce Edwin Callins fails to note that Callins's Supreme Court appeal generated the most famous death-penalty dissent in the past quarter century, written by Justice Harry Blackmun, a longtime death-penalty supporter.

to his legal staff, "For every death penalty case, they brief me thoroughly, review the arguments made by the prosecution and the defense, raise any doubts or problems or questions." Bush always maintained that this review provided what he called a "fail-safe" method for ensuring due process and certainty of guilt. Asked about the governor's handling of capital cases, Johnny Sutton, Governor Bush's adviser on criminal-justice policy, told *The New York Times* in May of 2000, "This is probably the most important thing we do in state government."

But Gonzales's execution summaries belie these assurances of thorough and judicious review. The memoranda seem attuned to a radically different posture, assumed by Bush from the earliest days of his administration—one in which he sought to minimize his sense of legal and moral responsibility for executions. Bush repeatedly cited a Texas statute that says a governor may do nothing more than grant a thirty-day reprieve to an inmate unless the Board of Pardons and Paroles has recommended a broader grant of clemency. Admittedly, the governor's clemency authority is far more limited in Texas than in, for example, Illinois, where Governor George Ryan unilaterally commuted the death sentences of 167 men and women last January, shortly

when the victim had been murdered; investigations by two successive state attorneys general subsequently concluded that Lucas had been wrongly convicted. Concerned that Lucas was about to be executed for a crime he hadn't committed, Bush's office let the BPP know that Bush was unwilling to see that happen. The BPP soon recommended (with a 17–1 vote) commutation to life in prison, which Bush then approved. Explaining his decision, Bush noted that the jurors at Lucas's trial "did not know" certain facts that came out only after trial. Gonzales could have raised a similar concern in his Terry Washington summary, but didn't.

At the outset of his administration Governor Bush presented a standard for clemency that all but ensured that few if any death sentences would be seriously examined. "In every case," he wrote in *A Charge to Keep*, "I would ask: Is there any doubt about this individual's guilt or innocence? And, have the courts had ample opportunity to review all the legal issues in this case?" This is an extraordinarily narrow notion of clemency review: it seems to leave little, if any, room to consider mental illness or incompetence, childhood physical or sexual abuse, remorse, rehabilitation, racial discrimination in jury selection, the competence of the legal defense, or dispari-

ties in sentences between co-defendants or among defendants convicted of similar crimes. Neither compassion nor “mercy,” which the Supreme Court as far back as 1855 saw as central to the very idea of clemency, is acknowledged as being of any account.

The record suggests that what Bush described in his autobiography as “a fair hearing and full access to the courts” meant in reality nothing more than that a case had received some sort of legal attention at all state and federal levels. In the case of Karla Faye Tucker, the first woman executed in Texas in more than a hundred years, Bush wrote to at least two constituents that he had refused to grant a reprieve precisely because “the courts, including the United States Supreme Court,” had “reviewed the legal issues in this case” and denied all appeals. But clemency is a political act, not a judicial one. By eliminating “legal issues” from executive consideration, Bush in effect refused to address what were often the condemned person’s strongest claims. Indeed, the fact that courts have rejected a defendant’s legal claims arguably places an added burden on a governor—as the conscience of the state and the literal court of last resort—

Although Terry Washington’s guilt was never seriously disputed, in at least two other capital cases profound doubts about guilt were raised by the defense but virtually ignored by Gonzales. In the case of David Wayne Stoker, for example, Gonzales devoted just eighteen sentences to the extraordinarily complex circumstances of the crime, leaving out essentially all the mitigating evidence and failing to address a multitude of questions about both the evidence against Stoker and his due-process rights. Ronnie Thompson, a key state witness, initially told the police, and then the court, that Stoker had confessed to a 1986 murder. But following Stoker’s conviction Thompson recanted, explaining that he’d lied in court because the prosecutor had threatened to bring a perjury charge against him if he didn’t stick to his original account. Bush should have been told that. During Stoker’s trial, in 1987, Thompson’s wife, Debbie, left him to move in with Carey Todd, the prosecution’s chief witness; she got a piece of the Crime Stoppers reward that Todd received for naming Stoker. Gonzales failed to mention that drug and weapons charges against Todd were dropped the very day he testified against Stoker; and that

In his summary of the case of David Wayne Stoker, Gonzales left out the fact that James Grigson, the psychiatrist who testified that Stoker was a sociopath who would “absolutely” be violent again, had never even examined Stoker.



DAVID WAYNE STOKER

to conduct a scrupulous review. This is especially true in Texas, where more than a third of executions in the United States since 1976 have occurred; where half of all capital cases are overturned on appeal because of errors during trial; where seven innocent men have been freed from death row, including one under Bush; where, according to *The Dallas Morning News*, nearly a quarter of the condemned were represented by attorneys who had been disciplined for professional misconduct; and where 30 percent of those executed under Bush between his inauguration in 1995 and June 11, 2000, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, were represented by attorneys who presented no mitigating evidence or only one witness during the sentencing phase of the trial. Given this environment, Gonzales’s neglect of mitigating evidence in the clemency-review process is highly problematic.

But the real problem with citing thorough court review as a standard for denying clemency is that none of the 152 executions Bush approved would have landed on his desk had the cases not already passed through all the courts. To assert—as Bush did—that defendants have “full access to the courts” does not establish any sort of guideline for ensuring due process; it merely describes the judicial process.

Todd thus had an apparent motive for setting him up. Gonzales also failed to mention that a state investigator, a police officer, and Todd all lied in court about what Todd received for his testimony; that the jury wasn’t told about Todd’s possible motive for framing Stoker; and that James Grigson, a psychiatrist who testified that Stoker was a sociopath who would “absolutely” be violent again (thereby making him eligible for a death sentence), had never even examined Stoker. Grigson, whose expert testimony has helped send dozens of men to death row, earning him the nickname Dr. Death, had been expelled from the American Psychiatric Association two years before the Stoker case was reviewed by Gonzales and Bush, because his testimony had repeatedly been found to be unethical. Another expert medical witness against Stoker, Ralph Erdmann, had relinquished his medical license in 1994 after pleading no contest to seven felonies tied to falsified evidence and botched autopsies. A special prosecutor’s investigation of Erdmann concluded that he falsified evidence in at least thirty cases, and that if “the prosecution theory was that death was caused by a Martian death ray then that was what Dr. Erdmann reported.” All this information was in the public record, yet Gonzales mentioned none of it in his memorandum to Bush.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Stephen Latimer, who represented Stoker in his clemency appeal, told me recently that he received a call from Gonzales's office about a week to ten days before the execution, advising him that there would be no reprieve. The timing is significant, because Gonzales's execution summary is dated June 16, 1997, the day of Stoker's execution. If that decision had been made a week or more before Bush even read the summary, it is fair to ask whether Bush was actually in the loop or—as many suspected—had simply made clear to both Gonzales and the BPP that he wasn't interested in commutations.

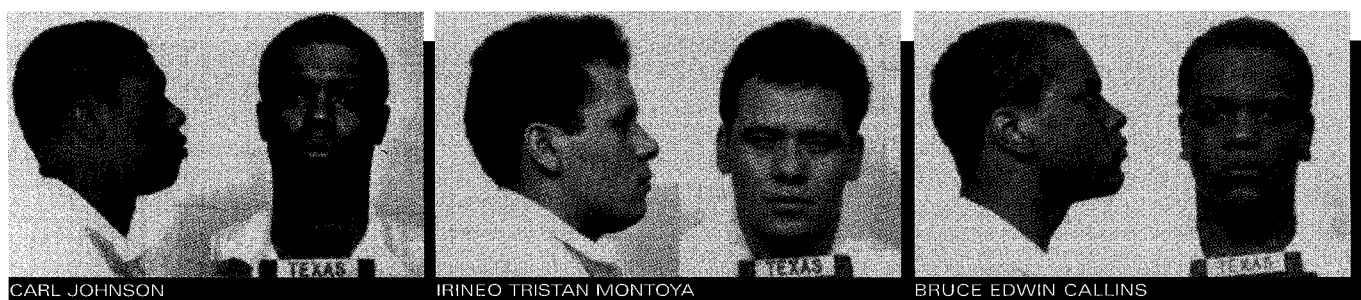
The handling of Stoker's clemency appeal was not unusual. Consider the case of Billy Conn Gardner, whose death-penalty case was plagued by issues of incompetent counsel, dubious witness testimony, and unheard mitigating evidence.

Gonzales's report to Bush gave no sense of these circumstances. It matter-of-factly described the robbery of a high school cafeteria in Dallas, during which Gardner, wearing a stocking to obscure his face, allegedly shot

threatened to bring other charges against Melvin Sanders did he finger Gardner as the murderer, and that in exchange for this testimony Sanders received complete immunity from prosecution for the murder and probation for pending forgery and firearms charges. The state also agreed not to prosecute Paula Sanders.

Gonzales told Bush in his summary that Paula "testified that she was unaware of the robbery plans"; but he neglected to mention that she had received several phone calls only minutes before the robbery and shooting, and that according to Carolyn Sims (whose name is absent from Gonzales's report), she appeared "nervous and upset" after taking these calls. Sims was not deposed until years after the trial, during Gardner's habeas corpus appeal. More important, Gardner's lawyer never interviewed Paula Sanders and met with Gardner only once before jury selection, for fifteen minutes, raising an obvious suggestion of ineffective counsel—which Gonzales also dismissed with no discussion.

The case is a disconcerting tangle of speculation and uncertainty. What Gonzales should have made clear to Bush during the clemency review is that the case involved



and fatally wounded Thelma Row, sixty-four, a cafeteria worker. Also in the cafeteria at the time was Paula Sanders, a co-worker who had told her husband, Melvin, that several thousand dollars in daily cafeteria receipts were processed in a back room at the school. Melvin, who drove the getaway car, claimed that he had persuaded Gardner to participate.

Paula, who knew Gardner, said that she could provide no description of the assailant, because her back was turned. Before Row died, however, she had been able to describe a man with a "bony face ... and a two-inch goatee." Gonzales didn't tell Bush that the state was unable to produce a single witness who recalled ever seeing Gardner with a goatee, or that two witnesses to the shooting—Carolyn Sims and the school custodian, Lester Matthews—described a man with reddish-blond hair, whereas Gardner's hair was black. Matthews nevertheless positively identified Gardner as the killer, and Gonzales accepted this testimony at face value—although Matthews didn't know Gardner, admitted to having seen the killer for only three or four seconds, and didn't actually identify him until his third police interview, three months after the crime. Also missing from Gonzales's memo were the facts that only after prosecutors

many unanswered and troubling questions. Gardner was put to death on February 16, 1995.

The Gonzales memoranda suggest that Gonzales was rarely, if ever, prompted to delve deeply into the cases he was reviewing for Bush. In his summary of the case of Carl Johnson, for example, dated September 18, 1995, the day before Johnson's execution, Gonzales failed to mention that Johnson's trial lawyer had literally slept through major portions of the jury selection. His memo on Irineo Tristan Montoya, dated June 18, 1997, the day of Montoya's execution, omits the single most important issue in the case: an alleged violation of international law, which had been brought to Bush's attention by, among others, the U.S. Department of State. His memo on Bruce Edwin Callins, dated May 21, 1997, the day of Callins's execution, fails to note that Callins's appeal to the Supreme Court generated the most famous death-penalty dissent in the past quarter century, written by Justice Harry Blackmun, a longtime death-penalty supporter.

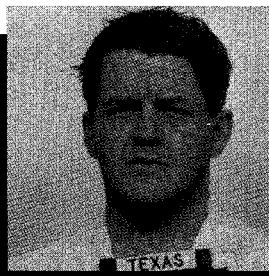
Karla Faye Tucker's 1998 clemency review is one of the few in which any evidence exists of a significant discussion between Bush and Gonzales, and the only instance in which Gonzales is known to have provided any documen-

tation beyond the execution summary. Bush cites the Tucker case as evidence of his compassion and his attentiveness to the process of clemency review. Gonzales has said that he and Bush began discussing Tucker's case months before the execution. Bush's autobiography devotes fifteen pages to Tucker. He writes that he anguished over his decision and had difficulty sleeping the night before her execution, and that signing off on it "was one of the hardest things I have ever done"; in the moments leading up to Tucker's execution he "felt like a huge piece of concrete was crushing me as we waited."

Why should Bush have been so tormented by assenting to Tucker's execution? According to the Bush standard for clemency, her case wasn't even worthy of consideration. Tucker didn't claim that she was innocent of murdering Jerry Lynn Dean and Deborah Thornton with a three-foot-long pickax in 1983. She said that she had been treated fairly by the courts and deserved her punishment. What helps to explain Bush's concern, of course, is that Tucker's case was the most highly publicized of any during his tenure as governor. In prison Tucker had become a born-

Bush didn't use this power because he had no interest in impeding the BPP, which was infamous for rubber-stamping executions. In a December 1998 district court hearing on a lawsuit brought by the death-row inmate Joseph Stanley Faulder (in whose trial a principal state witness was promised more than \$10,000 by the prosecutor to testify), Judge Sam Sparks concluded, "It is abundantly clear the Texas clemency procedure is extremely poor and certainly minimal." Sparks found that "none of the members" of the BPP read clemency petitions in their entirety; that "a flip of the coin would be more merciful than these votes"; and that the board provided no rationale whatsoever for its clemency recommendations. "There is nothing," Sparks said during the hearing, "absolutely nothing that the Board of Pardons and Paroles does where any member of the public, including the governor, can find out why they did this."

Alberto Gonzales told me in 2000 that in his execution briefings he always presented Governor Bush with a "detailed factual background of what happened," along with "other outstanding facts or unusual issues." Yet



JOSEPH STANLEY FAULDER

Gonzales's written execution summaries were Governor Bush's primary source of information in deciding whether someone would live or die. But Gonzales usually presented them to Bush on the day of an execution, and his oral briefings typically lasted no more than thirty minutes.

again Christian, like Bush. Her execution was opposed by, among others, one of Bush's daughters and a slew of otherwise ardent death-penalty supporters, including Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, who became convinced that she was remorseful, repentant, and rehabilitated. Nevertheless, dozens of Texas death-row inmates could claim similar conversion experiences, remorse, and repentance; and dozens had compelling claims regarding innocence or due process.

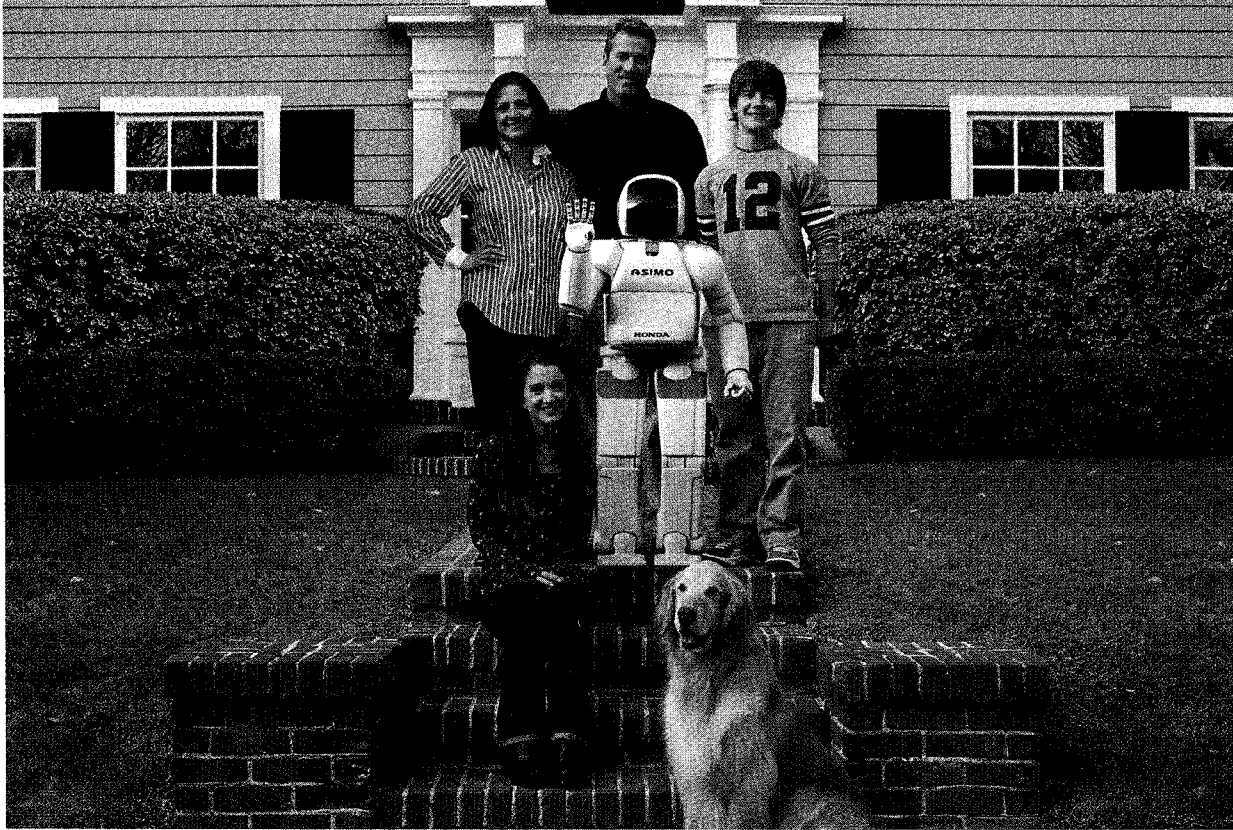
More than anything else, the Tucker case illustrates how Bush sought to deny responsibility for executions. "I could not convert Karla Faye Tucker's sentence from death to life in prison [without the BPP]," Bush stated, citing Texas law. Gonzales made the same point in a letter to the papal nuncio in Washington, who before the BPP made its recommendation had written Bush on behalf of the Pope to solicit clemency for Tucker: "Ms. Tucker's sentence can only be commuted by the Governor if the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles recommends a commutation of sentence." Of course, Bush did intervene in the subsequent Lucas case before hearing from the BPP.

Gonzales did not tell the papal nuncio that even after the BPP denied clemency the governor could have invoked a thirty-day reprieve to postpone this or any other execution.

a close examination of the written execution summaries he prepared for Bush certainly raises questions about the thoroughness of Gonzales's approach—and, ultimately, given the brevity of the summaries and the timing of their arrival at the governor's office, about the level of attention Bush could possibly have devoted to the clemency process. In his summaries of the cases of Terry Washington, David Stoker, and Billy Gardner, Gonzales did not make Governor Bush aware of concerns about ineffective counsel, essential mitigating evidence, and even compelling claims of innocence. These were all matters of life or death, requiring in-depth explanation and discussion, that no attorney in Gonzales's position should leave out of a written case summary or save for a thirty-minute oral briefing—especially if both are to be delivered on the very day of a scheduled execution. In a state where the criminal-justice system has erred with well-documented regularity, this was a grave failing. ▀

*Alan Berlow, a freelance journalist, writes frequently about criminal-justice issues. He is the author of *Dead Season: A Story of Murder and Revenge* (1996). His documentary about jurors in capital murder cases, "Deadly Decisions," was produced for American RadioWorks and broadcast on NPR stations last year. His article "The Wrong Man" appeared in the November 1999 *Atlantic*.*

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IN PRAISE OF NEPOTISM

Americans censure nepotism on the one hand and practice it as much as they can on the other. There's much to be said for "good" nepotism, the author argues—which is fortunate, because we're living in a nepotistic Golden Age

BY ADAM BELLOW

Illustrations by Jason Schneider

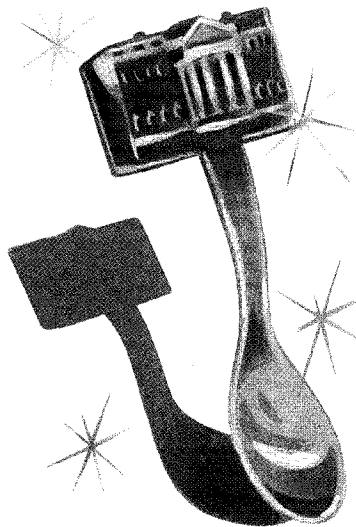
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For almost two years leading up to the November 2000 elections, expectations focused on Vice President Albert Gore Jr. and Texas Governor George W. Bush. Both were the sons of important political families. Their rivalry sparked an immediate interest in the "return" of political dynasties.

Gore, an able and hardworking politician, was described as a child of privilege whose public career had begun literally at birth, when his father persuaded the local paper to carry the news on its front page. After twenty-four years of government service Gore had compiled an impressive record.

Bush, too, was a talented politician, a two-term governor who had smoothly assumed control of his father's political network. Yet he suffered even more from the "silver-spoon" label. Following closely in his father's footsteps without equaling his accomplishments, Bush seemed derivative, uncertain: a bad copy of his father. For many, he was aptly described by a comment aimed at the senior Bush in 1988 by the Texas commissioner of agriculture, Jim Hightower, now a radio personality: "He is a man who was born on third base and thinks he hit a triple."

Many people were offended by the idea that the presidency could be claimed as a birthright, as though it were family property. But others saw in Bush the authenticity Gore lacked, suggesting that the rebellious youth who eventually accepts mature responsibilities is better liked and trusted than the dutiful son who suppresses his true inclinations in order to please a demanding father. In effect, then, the 2000 election was a referendum not on the validity of dynastic succession in a democracy but on which kind of successor we

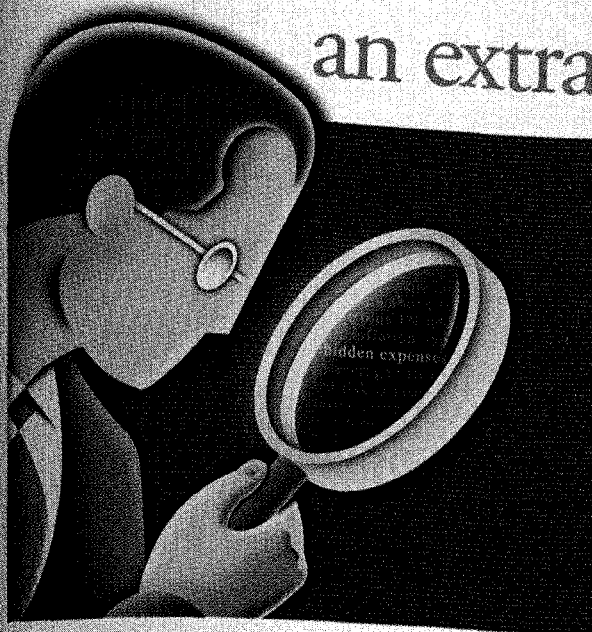


prefer. The Prodigal Son won out over the Dutiful Son. The glad-handing frat boy defeated the humorless wonk.

No sooner had Bush taken office (thanks partly to the decision of a Supreme Court dominated by Reagan-Bush appointees) than he began doling out appointments to relatives of other leading Republicans. Michael Powell, the son of Secretary of State Colin Powell, became chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Elaine Chao, the wife of Senator Mitch McConnell, became Secretary of Labor. Chao's chief labor attorney, Eugene Scalia, is the son of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and Justice William Rehnquist's daughter went to Health and Human Services. Elizabeth Cheney, the Vice President's daughter, became a deputy assistant secretary of state, and her husband became chief counsel for the Office of Management and Budget. In a crowning act of nepotistic chutzpah, Bush acceded to Senator Strom Thurmond's request that he appoint the twenty-eight-year-old Strom Thurmond Jr. U.S. attorney for South Carolina.

Helen Thomas, the former UPI Washington correspondent, declared in a column that the Bush Administration had become "a family affair, reeking of nepotism." (Nepotism is often said to reek, as though it were a pile of dirty laundry.) "You'd think an administration headed by the son of a former president might be a teensy bit leery of appearing to foster a culture of nepotism," Andrew Sullivan wrote in *The New Republic*. Sullivan produced a long list of people who had gotten jobs in Washington through such connections, and concluded, "All this nepotism is a worrisome sign that America's political class is becoming increasingly insular."

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The 2002 midterm elections greatly strengthened this impression. All over the country sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, wives and widows of elected officials were strongly in evidence. Most prominent was Florida's governor, Jeb Bush, re-elected by a healthy margin. In Massachusetts, Mitt Romney, son of the former Michigan governor George Romney, became governor. In New Hampshire, John E. Sununu, son of a former governor and presidential chief of staff, beat the sitting governor, Jeanne Shaheen, for a U.S. Senate seat. In Arkansas, Tim Hutchinson, whose brother Asa was a congressman and is now an undersecretary in the Department of Homeland Security, lost his Senate seat to the state attorney general, Mark Pryor, son of the former Arkansas governor and senator David Pryor. Lucille Roybal-Allard, who occupies the California congressional seat once held by her father, was also re-elected. And in North Carolina, Elizabeth Dole, the wife of Bob Dole, won a Senate race against Erskine Bowles, a former Clinton chief of staff (and the son of a state politician). Meanwhile, the position of House minority leader was claimed by Representative Nancy Pelosi, the daughter of a five-term Maryland congressman and Baltimore mayor, who had risen swiftly in California politics in part through her skillful use of dynastic connections. Pelosi was opposed by Harold Ford Jr., a young black congressman who had succeeded to his father's seat in Tennessee.

The widespread perception of a tilt toward nepotism is correct: the American political class, along with other sectors of our society, is increasingly filled with the offspring of established parents. This phenomenon has gone largely unnoticed or has been apprehended in a piecemeal fashion. The few who have commented on it have voiced alarm that we are returning to a society based on hereditary status, complete with a corporate aristocracy and a political House of Lords. Where I differ from these critics is in not seeing the trend as an ominous departure from American principles. Occupational traditions within families are very much a part of our national fabric—much more so than most people realize. Their eclipse since World War II has been the exception in American history, not the rule, and their return is an encouraging sign, not a cause for alarm. Indeed, this is the kind of nepotism of which this country needs not less but more.

The proliferation of family ties has been broadly described as a “new nepotism” or a “new dynasticism” in American politics. There is an undeniable advantage to bearing a recognizable name in a media-driven electoral system, and to having easy access to parents’ fundraising and political networks. Whatever the cause, the dramatic surge in family succession signals a quiet revolution as a new generation comes forward to claim its inheritance. Some Americans have viewed the new successors as opportunists trading on their famous names and family connections. But many others embrace the notion that continuing a family tradition has a dignity and value of its own.

Take business, for example. Every year the business press devotes considerable ink to the ups and downs of business heirs such as H. Fisk Johnson, of Johnson Wax, and Lachlan Murdoch, the thirty-one-year-old heir apparent to the multi-billion-dollar media conglomerate run by his father, Rupert Murdoch. At other large firms family leadership is making a comeback: Harold McGraw III is the first family member to head the McGraw-Hill publishing company since 1983, and Ford Motor’s CEO, William Ford, is the first family member to run the business in a generation. These and other family appointments (such as those of Motorola’s Christopher Galvin and the chewing-gum magnate William Wrigley Jr.) were called signs of a new nepotism in American business, with new expectations: observers and stockholders called on these scions to take their firms in bold new directions, rather than simply continuing their fathers’ work.

Craft and service professions are often family dominated. The Lairds of New Jersey have been making liquor since 1780; the Coors family of Colorado has been making beer since 1873. Brown-Forman, maker of Jack Daniel’s and Southern Comfort, has been a family business for more than 130 years and ascribes its success to a policy of “planned nepotism.” Many other specialties, such as glass-blowing, candy making, circus performing, and fireworks, are passed down through families. Funeral homes are also frequently family owned.

In fact, the great majority of American businesses are family owned or controlled, including many Fortune 500 companies. Thus nepotism in business is perhaps to be expected. More surprising is the rapid growth of family succession in areas such as entertainment, the arts, and sports.

The men who built the movie industry in the 1920s and 1930s were nepotists on a grand scale, and some of Hollywood’s greatest figures owed their breaks to family ties—though many of them denied it. In the 1960s and 1970s there were dozens of second-generation actors, including Jane and Peter Fonda, Tatum O’Neal, Michael Douglas, Sally Field, and Sissy Spacek (the cousin of Rip Torn). Today there are hundreds—far too many to list. Kate Hudson is the daughter of Goldie Hawn. Gwyneth Paltrow, the daughter of Blythe Danner and the late Bruce Paltrow, got her break when “uncle” Steven Spielberg cast her in *Hook*. Family ties also prevail among producers, directors, and writers, and also film and sound editors, cinematographers, makeup artists, costume and set designers, stunt men, and musicians—among them the Newman family, which has included eight composers.

Television is another industry in which who you know can mean as much as what you know. The actor, writer, and director Rob Reiner, son of the writer and comedian Carl Reiner, got his break when his father’s friend Norman Lear cast him in *All in the Family*. Aaron Spelling cast his daughter, Tori, in *Beverly Hills 90210*; his son Randy is also an actor. The producer Steven Bochco has cast several family members

in his shows, and his son Jesse co-produces *NYPD Blue*. "Bocho," he says good-naturedly, "is Polish for nepotism."

Today the music industry is bursting with successors: in 1998, Sean Lennon and Jakob Dylan both released CDs (Sean's half-brother Julian had a brief musical career in the 1980s). Both the sons of Ringo Starr are drummers (Zak Starkey now plays for The Who). By the time he was twenty-four Enrique Iglesias, the son of Julio, had put out four CDs and had sold more than 14 million records; his older brother is also pursuing a career as a singer. Whitney Houston got her start singing backup with her mother, Cissy Houston, and is a cousin of Dionne Warwick's. Norah Jones, the daughter of Ravi Shankar, was showered with Grammys at this year's awards ceremony. This is not to mention the well-known and extensive family ties in Motown, jazz, and country and western.

Family traditions have also been known among writers, but never before in such numbers. Martin Amis started publishing novels at an early age and has by now upstaged his father, Kingsley Amis. Margaret Drabble and A. S. Byatt are sisters, and the three Barthelme brothers have all published multiple books. Susan Minot's sister Eliza has published a book based on the same family events depicted in Minot's own debut novel. The daughters and niece of John McPhee have written several books. I myself am the son of the novelist Saul Bellow, and I got my job in publishing through what might be called the neocon family network—the same network that aided John Podhoretz, William Kristol, Daniel Wattenberg, Jonah Goldberg, and Joshua Gilder, all children of well-known conservatives.

Many children of doctors and lawyers become doctors and lawyers themselves, and with the entrance of large numbers of women into these professions, the proportion of professional families has sharply increased. (One study has found that the children of doctors are 14 percent more likely to be admitted to medical school than non-successors.) Military families have also been known in every era of American history, bearing such distinguished names as Perry, Lee, MacArthur, and Patton; Custer got several of his relatives killed at Little Big Horn. Religious pulpits, too, are often handed down from father to son. Martin Luther King Jr. was the son of a prominent Baptist preacher who was also a

civil-rights leader. In 2000 the Reverend Billy Graham handed the reins of his religious organization to his son Franklin; Graham's daughter also has her own ministry. The sons of the architect I. M. Pei work for their father and continue his tradition.

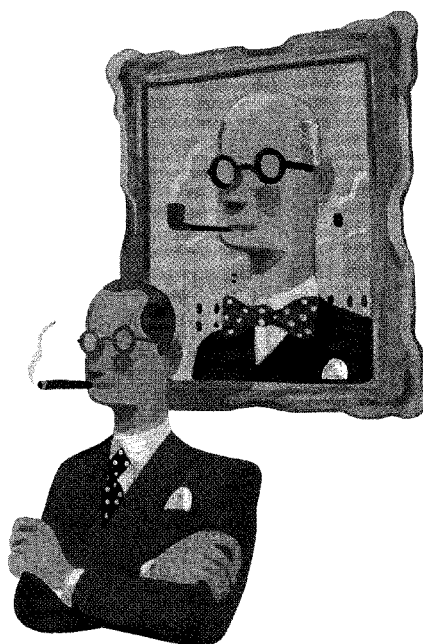
Nor are such tendencies confined to elite professions. The father-son tradition in labor unions continues, especially in the building trades. The prevalence of family ties in police and fire departments is also well established; the strength of these traditions was brought home viscerally in the lists of dead firemen after the World Trade Center disaster.

We think of sport as a Darwinian arena in which only the fittest survive—and so it is. Yet family ties increasingly permeate sports and sports-related professions. Take baseball: the left fielder Barry Bonds is the son of the coach and former outfielder Bobby Bonds and the godson of Willie Mays. There are also assorted Alomars, Alous, Bells, Boones, Berras, Macks, Motas, Roses, Sislers, and Stottlemeyers. Much the same holds true for football, basketball, hockey, stockcar racing, and boxing: Laila Ali, the daughter of Muhammad Ali, and Jacqui Frazier-Lyde, the daughter of Ali's old rival Joe Frazier, have entered the world of women's professional boxing and seem slated to carry that rivalry into a new generation.

No social scientist has studied modern American nepotism. But you don't need a degree in sociology to realize that there is a new boom in generational succession. The question is, what does it mean? Why is it happening now in the most democratic and individualistic society on earth? Doesn't it fly in the face of our commitment to merit and equal

opportunity? Are we creating a new caste hierarchy based on occupation, similar to that of the medieval guilds? More to the point, how will we square our embrace of the new nepotism with our traditional aversion to the old?

Think back to the days before the widespread class mixing and upward mobility brought about by World War II, not to mention the civil-rights and feminist movements. In the 1920s and 1930s a certain kind of nepotism was everywhere, for a certain class of people. A young man of good family who went to Croton or Choate was admitted as a matter of course to Harvard, Princeton, or Yale, after which



We have long viewed nepotism as something bad by definition. That negative view of nepotism, however, is not a natural or a God-given law but an artifact of social and cultural history.

he joined his father's Wall Street firm and one or more exclusive clubs, where he mingled with men of his set. If he didn't go to work for his father, he worked for a friend of his father's or the father of a friend, and if he married the boss's daughter, he could expect to be put on the fast track to the executive suite. Whether or not he rose all the way to the top, he would always be provided for.

No one (or almost no one, at any rate) can simply pick up the phone these days and get his kid a high-paying job, a record deal, or a spot on the national ticket. Few of today's successors got their jobs through what we would consider to be egregious nepotism. But more and more that kind of outright intervention isn't necessary. The whole thing works by a kind of natural osmosis. Growing up around a business or a vocation creates an early interest in the field, and a desire to please or imitate one's parents can exert a potent influence. But successors have a powerful advantage other people do not enjoy. Doors open, and people often prove happy to do favors for the children of colleagues who they hope may one day return the favor. All that is required to profit from this kind of opportunity is a willingness to take advantage of it.

It is worth dwelling for a moment on the differences between the old nepotism and the new. The old nepotism involved parents' hiring their children outright or pulling strings in their behalf. It was also highly coercive: obedient daughters married according to their parents' wishes, and dutiful sons allowed their fathers to chart their careers and often to select brides for them as well. The new nepotism operates not from the top down but from the bottom up: it is voluntary, not coercive; it springs from the initiative of children, not the interest of parents; it tends to seem "natural" rather than planned. Although not nepotism in the classic sense, it is rightly called nepotism because it involves exploiting the family name, connections, or wealth. The method may be different, but the result is much the same.

Mainly, however, the new nepotism differs in combining the privileges of birth with the iron rule of merit in a way that is much less offensive to democratic sensibilities. This is what explains the astonishing latitude—in effect, the room to fail—that we seem perfectly willing to grant the new successor generation. Americans increasingly feel that there is nothing wrong with hiring a relative or giving someone else's relative a break, so long as he or she is qualified. We even say that pulling strings to help relatives who are qualified is not really nepotism. But this leaves us in the inconsistent position of arguing that hiring a relative is or is not nepotism depending on the relative's performance.

We have tied ourselves in knots around this question for a simple reason: we have long viewed nepotism as something bad by definition. That negative view of nepotism, however, is not a natural or a God-given law but an artifact of social and cultural history.

Dictionaries trace the word "nepotism" to the Latin root *nepos*, meaning "nephew" or "grandson." But this etymology is misleadingly narrow. The word derives more directly from the Italian *nipote*, which can refer to almost any family member, of any generation, male or female. *Nipotismo* came into wide use in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to describe the corrupt practice of appointing papal relatives to office, usually illegitimate sons described as nephews, and for a long time this ecclesiastical connection continued to be reflected in dictionaries. (Even today some dictionaries give "illegitimate son of an ecclesiastic" as one definition of "nephew.") The modern definition of "nepotism" is simply favoritism based on kinship, but most people today use the term very narrowly, to mean hiring not just a relative but one who is grossly incompetent. The word is also used very broadly, to describe a range of affinities that go well beyond the family.

From the working man's perspective, nepotism means hiring or promoting the boss's son-in-law, nephew, or girlfriend over the heads of more qualified candidates. This violates our basic sense of fairness and elicits revulsion and anger toward those who practice nepotism and—even more, perhaps—those who profit from it. Yet in family businesses nepotism is often the rule, and it is usually accepted as the way things are by everyone involved. In such cases nepotism appears to be a problem only when the beneficiary is manifestly unqualified.

Economists view nepotism as an obstacle to healthy change in business firms, one that results in waste and inefficiency. Yet some acknowledge that nepotism may be a rational practice, because it can reduce the cost of extensive talent searches. Still others argue that hiring family members is the best way to promote important values of trust and solidarity. And despite official anti-nepotism policies, many executives admit that they prefer to hire the relatives of current employees, because their experience suggests that the proven conduct of a relative best predicts the behavior of a prospective worker.

From a feminist perspective, the word "nepotism" evokes a long history of slights against women, given that in historical practice it has favored sons over daughters. Even after the feminist revolution nepotism continues to play a role in rearguard efforts to preserve the male monopoly on power. This is evident from the intensity of the feminist campaign against exclusive men's clubs, old-boy networks, and the "glass ceiling" that blocks the advancement of female executives. From the perspective of black Americans, nepotism may be perceived as tantamount to racism, since favoritism toward whites, whether relatives or not, is objectively no different from discrimination against blacks.

For most Americans, nepotism is first and last a class issue—a way for the rich to warehouse their unemployable offspring while keeping the lower classes in their place. In fact, however, systematic nepotism has been practiced more

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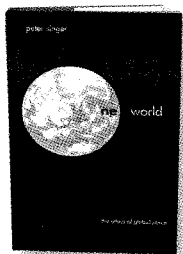
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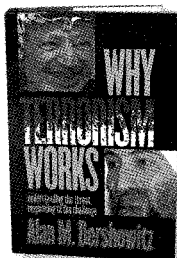
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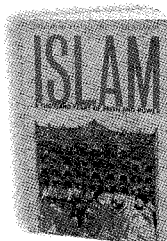
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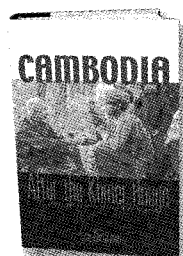
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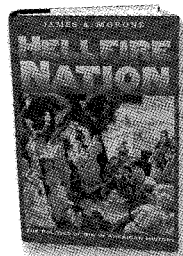
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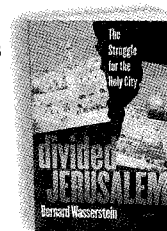
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or less continuously by both the upper and the lower classes, without ambivalence or apology. It was the middle class that pushed the merit principle, rising as it did through the institutions of the market and the state, in which promotion depends on bureaucratic efficiency. This is one of the things that make the new nepotism such a surprising development—it is essentially a middle-class phenomenon.

The old nepotism can be seen now as illegitimate and undesirable, a form of social cheating. But it was based on positive impulses.

Parents have a natural impulse to pass something on to their children, just as children wish to accept whatever their parents have to give. The sum of these transactions is the way we pass on our cultural traditions and values. When we talk about nepotism, what we are really talking about is the transmission of property, knowledge, and authority from one generation to the next.

All societies are organized at the most basic level around the processes of marriage, reproduction, and succession. Every society therefore evolves a “nepotistic formula” geared to its needs and conditions. These formulas arise as adaptations to a given set of social and ecological conditions. The unique features of the American nepotistic formula are the result of a long historical process whose dominant trend has been the breakup of the large extended families typical of agrarian societies and the emergence of the nuclear family as the fundamental unit of industrial civilization. Concurrent with this trend has been the American project of creating a truly egalitarian society—our attempt to fulfill the promise that has been at the heart of American democracy for more than two hundred years. This project has involved a long war between the hereditary principle and the principle of merit.

The American war against nepotism began in the eighteenth century, with the abolition of English inheritance practices such as primogeniture and entail, in which the family estate was passed intact to the oldest son. The replacement of these practices with a more egalitarian pattern of partible inheritance swept the country after the American Revolution. This democratic change was thanks largely to Thomas Jefferson, who hoped to break up the great landed estates of the Colonial period. The trend continued in the

nineteenth century, with laws against polygamy and the marriage of cousins, and with the creation of a federal civil service based on merit and efficiency rather than on family connections. Nevertheless, family interests continued to be important in the construction of ethnic institutions, including the American Catholic Church, the urban political machine, and the early labor movement.

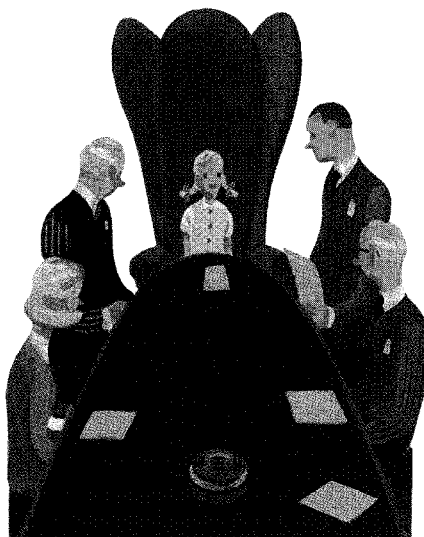
In the twentieth century the war on nepotism entered a progressive phase, with strictures on the use of political patronage to benefit kin. This phase culminated in the historic

New Deal and civil-rights legislation, which uprooted the last legal barriers to equal opportunity. It was at this time that anti-nepotism policies began to be widely adopted in most large-scale institutions, both public and private. Just as the merit system seemed to have triumphed, however, the same civil-rights provisions were used to challenge anti-nepotism rules as themselves discriminatory—especially against women, who were often barred from employment at schools and companies where their husbands also worked. The rapid rollback of no-spouse rules at universities, law firms, and newspapers and in many other environments has led to a proliferation of professional marriages and sparked the current boom in generational succession.

The new nepotism is a serious matter, because it bears on the formation of elites in a democracy. Elites and upper classes have always been controversial for Americans, and since the Revolution we have viewed them with particular suspicion. Yet a century of sociology has concluded that an elite is a practical necessity for any society. The real question is, what kind of elite will you have—an open, meritocratic elite that is continually refreshed from other strata of society, or a closed and

exclusive elite that withdraws into castelike isolation and merely seeks to perpetuate its privileges?

The tendency in American life since World War II has been toward individualism, mobility, and the dissipation of family bonds. The “return” of nepotism therefore seems especially disturbing. Critics from both left and right have pointed out the worrisome consequences of reviving the hereditary principle. Several writers have recently argued that after a long period of extreme social mobility and mixing, the United States is undergoing a new process of stratification. Call it what you like, the overclass, the



The new nepotism is the transformation of an ancient practice into a new and more acceptable form—one that can satisfy nepotistic impulses without violating the American social compact.

cognitive elite, the meritocracy, today's American elite increasingly lives in its own segregated communities, sends its children to the same exclusive schools, marries within its own class, and acts in other ways to pass on its accumulated wealth, position, and privileges. In other words, the American meritocracy appears to be turning into an exclusive, inbred caste.

Such, at any rate, might be the argument of those who deny the legitimacy of the hereditary principle. But this is not my view. Rather, I would suggest that the new nepotism represents a valuable corrective to the excesses of meritocracy. The late historian and cultural critic Christopher Lasch argued that an elite that regards itself as fit to rule by virtue of its merit owes no gratitude or deference to anyone. It has no ethical tie to the mass of ordinary people, and is therefore unresponsive to their needs. We spent two centuries trying to get nepotism out of government, but Lasch suggests that meritocracy unleavened by nepotism lacks a necessary humanizing element.

The ideal would be a balance between these two principles—a balance we appear to have struck with our new and distinctively American form of meritocratic nepotism. The new nepotism is therefore not the return of something tribal and archaic but the transformation of an ancient practice into a new and more acceptable form—one that can satisfy the permanent human impulses behind nepotism without violating the American social compact.

Since we are clearly not going to get rid of the new nepotism anytime soon, Americans must come to terms with it. That means learning to practice it in accordance with the unwritten rules that have made it, on balance, a wholesome and positive force. If history shows anything, it is that nepotism in itself is neither good nor bad. It's the way you practice it that matters. Those who observe the hidden rules of nepotism are rewarded and praised; those who do not are punished, often savagely. These rules—derived from my own study of a number of dynastic families, from the biblical House of David to the Kennedys and the Bushes—can be reduced to the following simple injunctions:

1. *Don't embarrass me.* The first rule of patronage has always been that the protégé's actions and manner reflect on the patron. By holding a patron responsible for his protégé's performance, the Mandarins of the Chinese imperial bureaucracy introduced a powerful corrective to the potential for nepotistic abuses. This is also the corrective built into the modern nepotistic equation.

2. *Don't embarrass yourself, or You have to work harder than anyone else.* If the protégé is obliged to respect the patron, he is equally obliged to respect himself and his colleagues. A democratic society is founded on a moral commitment to equal opportunity, and those who enjoy advantages of birth must make an effort to counteract the natural resentment of those who do not. That is why

"good" business heirs display outstanding dedication—arriving early, leaving late, and in other respects going out of their way to win the approval of their colleagues. This is what distinguishes the new nepotism from the old: other people must prove their merit before the fact, but nepotees must prove it after.

3. *Pass it on.* Although nepotism is considered selfish, it proceeds from a generous impulse to pass something on to one's children, and this we think of as entirely praiseworthy. But if nepotism is in some respects a two-way street, it is also a one-way transaction. We therefore express our gratitude to our parents in the form of generosity to our children. This wholesome consciousness implies a certain humility and an acceptance of mortality.

Above all, it is high time for us to get over our ambivalence about the "return" of dynastic families. This country is now old enough to have accumulated a large number of great families, and we can no longer deny their many obvious and constructive contributions. Americans admire the Adamses, the Roosevelts, and the Kennedys not just for their unity—a value that is becoming increasingly difficult to preserve in our mobile society—but for their sense of common purpose and the spirit of public service that they foster. There is much to be said for these "aristocratic" features of dynastic families, and as long as those families observe the meritocratic rules of the new nepotism, we really have no basis for complaint. Indeed, we should not only respect great families but try to be more like them. Rather than simply seeking to punish or stamp out the bad kind of nepotism, we should reward and encourage the good.

The risks inherent in the return of dynastic nepotism have been exaggerated and fail to take into account both the progress of meritocracy and the power of social envy in a democracy. Dynastic heirs walk on very thin ice in our society: we readily grant them the benefit of the doubt, but we hold them to extremely high standards, and at the first sign of their failing to meet those standards, the hammer comes down hard.

Nepotism may be objectively discriminatory, but given that people are going to practice it anyway, we may as well infuse it with meritocratic principles so that all can benefit. Let families compete for public honors; this has always been the soul of republican virtue, and it is up to us to recover this tradition in every generation. The spirit of family enterprise gives dignity and meaning to our lives, and is not only a spur to achievement but also a check on excessive ambition. It links the generations in a chain of generosity and gratitude. We would all be better off if we reflected more consistently and deeply not only on our debt to our ancestors but also on what we owe our descendants. ▀

Adam Bellow is an executive editor at large for Doubleday. This article has been adapted from his book, In Praise of Nepotism, to be published in July by Doubleday.

“THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY SUICIDE BILL”

*Democrats knew that campaign-finance reform would cripple their fundraising ability—but they backed the idea anyway, largely on principle.
Republicans knew that it would give their party an even bigger edge than it already had—but they staunchly opposed it, also largely on principle.
The fate of McCain-Feingold ultimately rests with the Supreme Court.
But principle has already cost the Democrats plenty*

BY SETH GITELL

Illustration by Steve Brodner

.....

Terry McAuliffe, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, is nothing if not a confident man. His confidence comes from his success in the many fields he has tackled over the years. During the 1990s he became the Democratic Party's most productive fundraiser while founding businesses of his own, chief among them a real-estate firm. “Don’t forget, I did start two dozen companies,” he told me when I visited him a few months ago. “I started my first business when I was fourteen years old. I was chairman of a bank when I was twenty-seven. Fundraising is like any other business.”

But although he doesn’t show it, McAuliffe has undoubtedly been feeling less confident about the business of fundraising since November 6, 2002, when the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 took effect. Commonly known as the McCain-Feingold Act, for its sponsors in the Senate (John McCain, a Republican from Arizona, and Russ Feingold, a Democrat from Wisconsin), the law bans what had become a key source of financing for both parties: federal “soft money,” or donations to a political party for general “party-building” activities such as get-out-the-vote efforts. Because such contributions were in theory not used to support specific federal candidates, they could be made in unlimited amounts, and their use was only loosely regulated by the Federal Election Commission. Under the provisions of McCain-Feingold all donations to national candidates or parties must come in the form of “hard money,” which is subject to annual contribution limits and other strict regulations. (State parties are still allowed to accept soft money in accordance with individual state laws. So are certain interest and issue-advocacy groups that have no official connection to a party.)

McCain-Feingold, which passed after years of argument over soft money, was immediately challenged, and in early May a federal district court struck down some key provisions of the law. The court was neither unanimous nor clear in its thinking and philosophy, and it issued a stay of the ruling later in the month, reinstating the law in its entirety until the Supreme Court decides whether it is constitutional. The decision will almost certainly come by early next year.

The law has already created wide ripples in the world of political fundraising, in some cases keeping political figures away from their usual rounds lest they be accused of soliciting soft money, which federal officeholders are not supposed to do under its provisions. A few days before our conversation McAuliffe was scheduled to speak at an awards dinner given by a prominent Hispanic interest group. Democratic officials have traditionally attended the dinner, an annual Washington event. But that evening, as McAuliffe was preparing to make his way across town, lawyers for the party advised him not to go. Because the interest group may have attempted to raise soft money for Hispanic get-out-the-vote efforts—a perfectly legal activity under McCain-Feingold so long as it is not done in concert with federal or party officials—it was unclear whether McAuliffe’s presence was permissible (the FEC and party lawyers are still working out the conditions under which such officials can attend this kind of event). McAuliffe stayed home.

For his party, troubles like McAuliffe’s are only the beginning. Contrary to a widespread impression, the Democratic Party has relied much more heavily on soft money in recent years than has the Republican Party; it has depended disproportionately on large contributions from wealthy donors to fill its coffers. The Republicans, for their part,



have had a hard-money advantage since 1980, when party officials decided to emphasize direct-mail fundraising aimed at a large number of relatively modest donors. The reform bill could hardly be more devastating to the Democrats if it had been drafted by the right-wing talk-show host Rush Limbaugh and the House majority leader, Tom DeLay, expressly to undermine Democratic election prospects for the foreseeable future. But the wound was largely self-inflicted; what's more, the Democrats knew in advance that it would be painful. Similarly, the advantage gained by the Republicans comes in spite of their own actions, actions that were taken with an understanding that they were contrary to practical party interests. When the bill passed in the House,

by 240 to 189, the vast majority of its supporters—198 representatives—were Democrats. Its opponents included 177 Republicans. The numbers in the Senate, where the bill passed by 60 to 40, are even more striking: forty-eight of the Senate's fifty Democrats voted for the measure, while thirty-eight of its forty-nine Republicans voted against.

What impelled so many members of Congress to act against their party's own good? There is, of course, no single answer to the question. But a surprisingly important one has to do with a quality that politicians are often said to lack: principle. The passing of McCain-Feingold, and the ways in which the fight over the bill took shape, provide a rare example of politics working the way civics textbooks would

have it—with legislators voting largely on the basis of conviction, not calculation.

THE BIRTH OF SOFT MONEY

The background for the McCain-Feingold bill begins with the last major change to the laws governing the financing of political campaigns: the Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1974. The amendments greatly expanded reforms made three years earlier and established the first meaningful caps on individual contributions to candidates—\$1,000. (Caps on individual contributions to parties were set subsequently.) An FEC ruling four years later allowed political parties to accept donations exceeding those caps, as long as they spent the extra money on party-building activities, rather than on the campaigns of any particular federal candidates (it reasoned that such activities were, for legal purposes, non-federal, and thus were outside the scope of federal scrutiny). With that ruling the commission effectively created the category that would come to be known as soft money.

It was almost inevitable that the money would eventually be spent on other political activities as well. Over time the parties came to consider an increasingly wide range of spending as falling under the party-building umbrella, and soft money was also funneled into uses that critics claimed could not be connected to party building at all. The notion that soft money did not fund particular candidates or their campaigns became a charade: candidates appeared at soft-money fundraisers and benefited directly from them. By 1996 the DNC was using soft money to air television ads—overseen by Bill Clinton, among others—that attacked Bob Dole for certain positions and praised Clinton for others. Although the ads were never found illegal, they drew criticism from Republicans and even some Democrats for the source of their funding—and, as the former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich wrote, they “opened the door wide” to soft-money abuses in the 2000 campaign.

In 1978, when the FEC issued its crucial ruling, the Democrats’ fundraising generally lagged behind the Republicans’. They desperately needed a means of competing more effectively for dollars. Still, it took them a decade to begin to realize the potential of soft money. Robert Farmer, the treasurer of Michael Dukakis’s 1988 presidential campaign, can take much of the credit for their finally doing so. Farmer crafted a fundraising strategy that made the Massachusetts governor easily the best financed of the Democratic presidential candidates. Early on he took notice of the Republican National Committee’s Eagle program, under which wealthy Republicans were asked for donations of \$10,000 each. Farmer, knowing that Massachusetts had a solid number

of wealthy Democrats, created a counterpart to the Eagles—the Trustees. But he asked donors to give \$100,000 each. And during the course of the campaign about 130 did. (The funds went to voter-registration drives and other activities for which soft money was clearly permitted.) At first the Republicans criticized Farmer’s program as excessive. Then they tried to follow suit. By 1992 both parties were soliciting even higher amounts.

Dukakis, of course, won the nomination but lost the election, and today he is perhaps best remembered for an ill-advised photograph of him popping up out of the turret of a tank. But his fundraising tactics paved the way for future Democratic campaigns.

During the next primary season Farmer signed on as Bill Clinton’s campaign treasurer, and McAuliffe joined Clinton’s fundraising team. Clinton’s strange alchemy enabled the Democrats to approach the Republicans’ success at raising money from wealthy donors. Part of their gains had to do with the fact that Clinton, a charter member of the pro-business Democratic Leadership Council, endorsed policies that appealed to the party’s wealthiest constituents, those corporate leaders with left-leaning social views. A larger part had to do

with his charisma, and with sheer chutzpah. By the end of the 1996 campaign that chutzpah had the Democratic Party mired in scandal, with the media reporting on legal but unsavory activities (such as luring major donors with high-priced coffee meetings and overnight stays in the

The Democratic Party has relied disproportionately on wealthy donors. In the 1996 election cycle 20 percent of its \$122 million in soft money came from just 168 people.

Lincoln bedroom) and on clearly illegal practices (including accepting donations from foreign nationals). By the summer of 1998, during Mark McGwire’s challenge to Roger Maris’s single-season home-run record, Democratic operatives would wonder out loud whether the party was going to receive more subpoenas that year than McGwire would hit home runs. (Final score: 70 home runs and, to the best of anyone’s recollection, 64 subpoenas.)

Immediately after the election the DNC, eager to revamp the party’s image, began examining Democratic fundraising practices. It established a compliance department to oversee fundraising activities, prevent illegalities, and process all paperwork for the FEC. That year party officials also conducted an internal study to determine the sources of its money. The results were deeply troubling. Of the \$122 million that the Democrats had raised in soft money during the 1996 election cycle (in which the Republicans raised \$141 million), nearly \$25 million—roughly 20 percent of the whole—had come from just 168 people.

During this brief period of self-examination, roughly the first half of 1997, the Democrats did little to raise money. Along with the extraordinary legal fees the party had in-

curred, the down period left the Democrats deeply in debt. To recover, they soon devised fundraising events unprecedented in scope; such lavish events, although they had drawn public ire, were within the law and were an almost inextricable part of the party's fundraising apparatus. In November of 1997 the party hosted a weekend getaway at a Florida resort, attended by both the President and the Vice President, for fifty donors willing to contribute \$50,000 each plus expenses; the following April it held a weekend of special events (including a performance of the musical *Ragtime* attended by Bill Clinton and Al Gore), which raised \$3.25 million. That year, 1998, also brought the Monica Lewinsky scandal, which actually helped the Democrats raise money; many members hastened to contribute because they saw the investigation as an attempt to destroy the party itself. By this point, however, with the party determined to avoid more inflammatory incidents, the rewards for top-dollar gifts had changed. Even the biggest donors received only what fundraisers referred to as "chum": silver picture frames and other knickknacks, and cufflinks whose quality varied according to the amount donated. These items were prized as long as they were associated in some way with the President. Reportedly the most cherished rewards were onyx cufflinks embossed with the presidential seal and bestowed by Clinton himself.

THE DRIVE FOR REFORM

Even as the Democrats were piling up soft money, the movement to eliminate it was gathering momentum. In 1993 Clinton had pressed for a bill, modeled after one vetoed by President George H.W. Bush the previous year, that would have allowed the national parties to continue to raise soft money, but would have more tightly restricted its use. The bill died in 1994, in a dispute about how much a political-action committee could give to a national candidate. Still, the nexus of money and politics was increasingly troubling politicians. Senators Feingold and McCain vigorously advocated reform. In late 1995 they collaborated on an op-ed article for *Roll Call*, a newspaper that covers Capitol Hill, in which they called for limits on soft money.

McCain notwithstanding, it was largely and increasingly the Democrats who spoke out in favor of campaign-finance reform; the excesses of the 1996 election had made it virtually a necessity for them to do so, at least in public. During an appearance on *The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer* several days after the 1996 election, for example, Richard Gephardt voiced his support for a ban on soft money (although, behind the scenes, he was helping to raise both hard and soft money for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee). During several 1997 debates between Steve Grossman, the DNC chairman, and Jim Nicholson, his Republican counterpart, Grossman offered to stop accepting soft money if the Republicans would do the same. Grossman's co-chairman, the Colorado governor Roy Romer, echoed the offer. Democrats could make this image-enhancing pro-

positional comfortably, knowing that the Republicans would never agree to it.

In private, however, the attitude toward reform was often different. Representative Marty Meehan, a Democrat from Massachusetts who was elected in 1992 in part because of his call to change the system, recalls speaking at a House retreat in 1997. He had been asked to brief members on the version of a reform bill he was backing. To Meehan's surprise, four fellow Democrats (he won't say who) then gave obviously coordinated speeches opposing the bill, each citing a different practical reason: the bill would make it harder for the Democrats to get out the vote; it would disproportionately hurt the Congressional Black Caucus (because its members, many of whom represented poor districts, relied more heavily than others on get-out-the-vote funds from the party); it wasn't constitutional; it would hurt the labor unions, curbing their ability to use funds from members' dues to run television ads for candidates they supported. "They were all prepared well in advance," Meehan told me. "I was set up."

The pattern that Meehan's experience points to, whereby Democrats publicly embraced but privately opposed reform, continued after the 2000 elections. But the ground was shifting, and genuine support for reform was growing. McCain's presidential campaign had made him an immensely popular national figure. Eliminating soft money had been a pledge of that campaign, one that had been praised in the editorial pages of many influential papers. And soon a host of corporate scandals—Enron, Global Crossing, Tyco—enhanced the climate for financial reform of any kind.

The final push for campaign-finance reform began on January 22, 2001, when McCain, Feingold, Meehan, and Representative Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican, held a press conference proposing the bill that, in slightly altered form, was eventually passed. There was little overt opposition from Democrats, and the bill began to make its way through Congress. A handful of Democrats worked, in most cases quietly, against the measure; but it was soon embraced, not just publicly but also in closed-door sessions, by both Gephardt and Tom Daschle, the Senate minority leader at the time, adding to its momentum. The bill passed in the House in February of 2002; the following month it passed in the Senate and was signed into law, although it did not take effect until eight months later.

SHOOTING THEMSELVES IN THE FOOT

The disastrous consequences of McCain-Feingold for the Democrats were immediate. In January and February of this year the main fundraising arms of the Republican Party took in roughly four times as much as their Democratic counterparts, raising \$39.4 million to the Democrats' \$9.6 million. The Republicans had raised more money in previous election cycles, too, when soft money was still legal, but the disparity had been far smaller (during the 1998 election cycle the Republicans raised \$114 million

to the Democrats' \$79 million; during the 2000 cycle, \$244 million to the Democrats' \$219 million; during the 2002 cycle, \$250 million to the Democrats' \$220 million).

These statistics herald a bleak future for the Democrats, who will face a powerful incumbent in 2004. In the 2000 election cycle Bush raised \$101 million in hard money. Al Gore, the sitting Vice President and the heir to Clinton's powerful fundraising machine, raised less than half that amount in hard money. The gap in contributions will doubtless widen under the new law, which raised the cap from \$1,000 to \$2,000 for individual contributions to a candidate and from \$20,000 to \$25,000 for individual contributions to a party. Bush is likely to double the amount he raised last time around. And the fact that legal certainty about McCain-Feingold will not come until the presidential election season is well under way is likely to prove far more damaging to the Democrats than to the Republicans.

Yet leading Democrats were fully aware of the bill's ramifications when they pushed for it. Robert Bauer, a partner in the law firm of Perkins Coie and counsel to the Democratic Senatorial and Congressional Campaign Committees, told party leaders exactly what lay ahead if the bill passed. He also briefed House and Senate Democrats at various party retreats.

Joseph Sandler, who serves as counsel to the DNC, expressed similar concerns. Although he says that he did not warn party leaders of the bill's consequences as publicly as Bauer did, they were certainly aware of his views. Noting that he was speaking to me as a private citizen rather than in his official capacity, he called the law "a fascist monstrosity." He continued, "It is grossly offensive ... and on a fundamental level it's horrible public policy, because it emasculates the parties to the benefit of narrow-focus special-interest groups. And it's a disaster for the Democrats. Other than that, it's great."

Gephardt, who will be seeking the Democratic nomination, is among those most directly affected. Few in the Democratic Party have raised as much soft money as he has; with the help of McAuliffe, he crossed the country numerous times after 1994 in an effort to raise enough money for the Democrats to retake the House.

Since the enactment of McCain-Feingold, Gephardt has spoken plainly about the Democrats' fiscal predicament. On the stump he has said that Republicans will probably raise three or four times as much money as Democrats for next year's election. Nevertheless, he says, there were pragmatic reasons for his backing of the bill. He argues that the party cannot match the Republicans at fundraising anyway, with or without soft money. He believes that Republicans will always capture most of the contributions from big-business interests. "If the issue is money, the Democrats are always going to be behind," he told me. "One of the ways I put this to members is that we were in a brick fight with the owner of the brickyard."

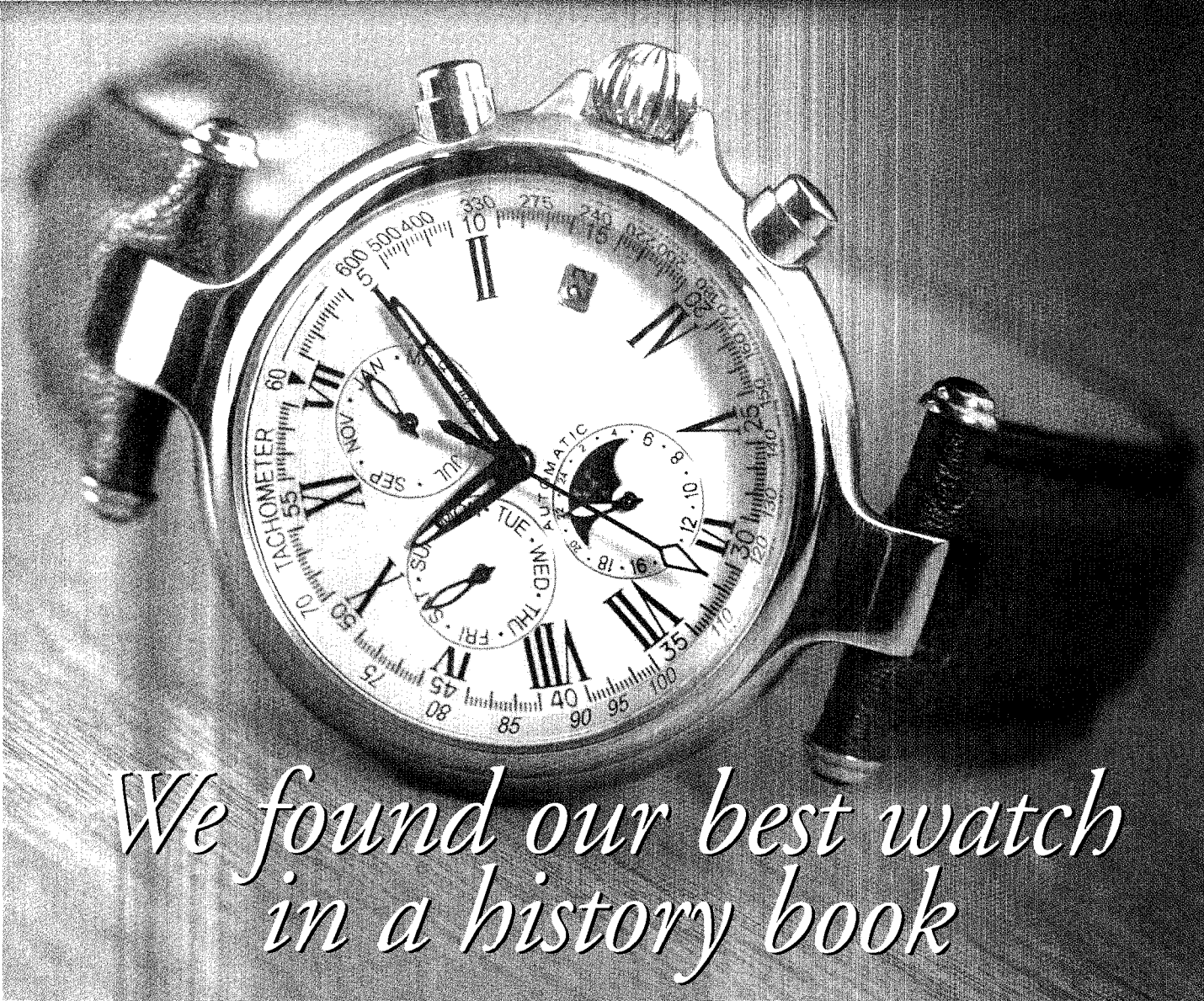
Gephardt maintains that Democratic opponents of campaign-finance reform had engaged in revisionist, or at

least selective, history. "They remembered what it was like when we had Clinton," he says. With the Democrats relying so heavily on so few soft-money donors, it would have been impossible for them to remain within striking distance of Republican fundraising efforts over time without Clinton and his personal magnetism. Realizing this undoubtedly made it easier for many Democrats to consider giving up soft money. In addition, backing the law allowed Democrats to reassert themselves as the party of "working families"—rhetoric they needed in order to counterbalance the image of wealthy donors being fêted at lavish resorts.

But Gephardt also gives loftier reasons for his position. He tends to avoid speaking about how his support for campaign-finance reform might affect his own immediate ambitions. When asked specifically why he backed a law almost guaranteed to hurt his chances as a presidential candidate, he offered an idealistic if somewhat ungainly reply. "I do what I think is right and what's best for the country," he told me. "If it inures to my disbenefit, then it inures to my disbenefit. There's nothing I can do about that."

Similar sentiments have been voiced by other backers of the bill. Fred Wertheimer, the founder of Democracy 21 and a former president of Common Cause (both nonprofit reform organizations), firmly believes that the Democrats supported the measure for the right reason—a principled desire to get soft money out of the system. He compares the current position of the Democratic leadership to that of President Lyndon B. Johnson after he signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act (although Wertheimer emphasizes that he does not equate the problem of soft money with the evils of segregation). The night Johnson signed the act, he said to his aide Bill Moyers, "I think we just delivered the South to the Republican Party for a long time to come." Wertheimer told me, "You could conclude that Johnson made a mistake, and I would tell you you're wrong, because he opened the door to ending segregation. You can't just decide what's best for the Democrats on an analytical basis and ignore the country." Feingold reinforces the point: "You can't keep a corrupt system in place to protect the status of your party."

Anyone who watches *Larry King Live* knows how much heat John McCain has taken from fellow Republicans for his role in campaign-finance reform. But it has scarcely affected him; at this point in his career McCain is a political entity unto himself, one who exists more or less apart from the Republican Party structure. For Christopher Shays, though, the situation is different, and from all appearances he is being punished for his sponsorship of the law. As the senior Republican on the House Government Reform Committee, Shays was in line to become chairman after Dan Burton, of Indiana, stepped aside. He was instead named vice-chairman. As if to underscore the reason he was passed over, the House leadership named as chairman Tom Davis, of Virginia, who as the head of the National



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Republican Congressional Committee had spearheaded fundraising efforts for congressional Republicans.

Shays gamely denies that these appointments represent punishment. "I didn't get killed," he told me. "Getting killed would have been if I didn't get chairman *or* vice-chairman. I feel fully engaged. My talents are being used." He does acknowledge that he still encounters friction and opposition from his colleagues about McCain-Feingold. In February he attended a retreat for Republican representatives; partway through a question-and-answer session with Republican lawyers on the legal implications of the new law, Shays began to feel that the lawyers were exaggerating the extent to which it would restrict party activities. He got in line to speak. Then his frustration took over. "I yelled out, 'You guys are not being fair about this legislation!'" he recalls. "Because they so dislike the law, it was hard for them to tell people how they could live under it."

Republican legislators had understood that the law would give them a fundraising advantage, but almost none of them saw this as a reason to get behind it. McCain admits that he never tried to explain to party members how they would profit from the law ("You never know how long a law is going to have the effects it does," he told me), but he assumes that they had to have realized. "I'm sure that was made known to them by certain analysts," he says. Indeed, Republican election lawyers, vigorously opposed to McCain-Feingold, privately referred to it as "the Democratic Party suicide bill." So why do Republicans seem to hate it so much? McCain connects the party's opposition to habit. "They were addicted to the soft money," he says. "Someone who is addicted to hard drugs probably knows he'd be better off without them. But he's not going to get off them unless he's forced to." That said, most Republican opponents, like most Democratic supporters, put their opposition in terms of genuine principle, even if it's a very different principle. Conservatives believe that First Amendment protections for the unbridled expression of political opinion extend to political donations and advertising. Republicans therefore see McCain-Feingold as nothing less than a threat to constitutional rights.

A GAME OF SURVIVOR

The passage of McCain-Feingold gave a boost to issue-advocacy groups such as the Sierra Club, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the Christian Coalition, and Republicans for Clean Air (the first three are known as 501(c)s and the fourth as a 527, for the sections of the federal tax code that give them tax-exempt status). Although the law bans soft-money contributions to traditional political-action

committees, the lawmakers did not ban such contributions to groups unconnected to parties, primarily out of concern that doing so might be unconstitutional. (The law does ban "electioneering": the groups cannot engage in broadcast advertising, commonly believed to be the most effective form of political advertising, within thirty days of a primary and sixty days of a general election.) Restrictions on how these groups can use their funds vary and will to some extent depend on the Supreme Court ruling, but the organizations are likely to have considerable freedom under any scenario.

Political operatives are moving to take advantage of such groups' privileges; a number of new groups have already been formed. "A few years ago everybody wanted to start up a dot-com," says Margaret Conway, the political director of the Sierra Club. "Now everybody wants to start up a 527. I compare it to a game of Survivor: everyone's forming new alliances and trying to kick each other off the island."

The ascendancy of these groups, like the ban on soft-money donations to national parties, promises to put Democrats at a disadvantage. The party's sources of soft money were for the most part not business or other interest groups but private individuals. Their donations depended in no

small part on close personal connections to politicians (remember those Clinton cufflinks); and under McCain-Feingold politicians cannot be explicitly associated with fundraising for issue-advocacy groups. Howard Wolfson, a former aide to Hillary Rodham Clinton and to the Dem-

ocratic Congressional Campaign Committee, has started a political-action group that has both a hard-money and a soft-money arm. A charismatic figure with a dry wit, Wolfson became something of a celebrity when he was the spokesman for Clinton's senatorial campaign, appearing (at least by phone) on *Late Show With David Letterman*. But even he, as a behind-the-scenes figure, will have difficulty soliciting large donations on the basis of his personality. He is the first to acknowledge the problem. "Without a politician making the pitch, it's a different ball game," he says. "There's no draw."

Many reform supporters are concerned that such groups will be used to circumvent McCain-Feingold's restrictions on PACs. (Indeed, 527 issue-advocacy committees are known as "stealth PACs.") One fear springs from the existence of two-pronged groups like Wolfson's, the National Rifle Association, and EMILY's List (a group that helps pro-choice Democratic women candidates). Backers of McCain-Feingold fear that funds raised by the soft-money arms of such groups could easily be funneled into the federal election process, in much the way that soft money first came to be abused. Another worry is that if highly ideological groups such as the Christian

The disastrous consequences of the law for the Democrats were immediate. In January and February the Republican Party took in roughly four times as much as the Democrats.

Coalition and NARAL Pro-Choice America are allowed to raise soft money, it could make its way into electioneering activities, with consequences that would be felt on a national level. "I'm very worried," McCain says. "It's the first of many attempts they're going to bring to get around the letter of the law." This worry has a basis in personal experience: in the last election cycle, shortly before Super Tuesday, Republicans for Clean Air ran television ads attacking McCain. Common Cause, Democracy 21, the Campaign Legal Center, and the Center for Responsive Politics have filed a complaint with the FEC alleging that some of the issue-advocacy groups are seeking unlimited contributions even though, under the law, they are too closely affiliated with a party to do so.

Meanwhile, the older, more traditional entities are trying to find a place in the new environment. Terry McAuliffe, the DNC chairman, occupies a spacious corner office overlooking Sixteenth Street, within sight of the White House. The shelves are adorned with photos of him with Bill Clinton, including a stylized black-and-white picture reminiscent of the famous 1960s White House photos of President John F. Kennedy with his brother Robert. McAuliffe is energetic and convincing as he explains how the party began revamping its fundraising efforts even before McCain-Feingold passed. In just two years, he says, the DNC has gone from having 400,000 direct-mail donors and no voter file to having a direct-mail list of nearly 700,000 and a compilation of the names and key characteristics of virtually all the country's registered voters. When McAuliffe assumed the chairmanship of the party, in February of 2001, the Democrats were \$15 million in debt. "Today, as I sit here, we're debt-free for the first time in the history of our party," he told me. "Our direct-mail base has grown by seventy percent in the past year. And we're under construction with spanking new headquarters, so we will never again have to lease space. And all with space-age technology—twenty-first-century stuff. Satellite services, all the stuff you need to go out and get new small donors."

McAuliffe is particularly proud of a computer system that lets operatives access the voter list. "Now we can give our grassroots activists correct names and addresses," he says. "We can call every person who voted in 2000—and all the people who didn't vote in 2000. If I want to talk to single women who make \$130,000 a year and have children, it takes me six seconds to pull that list up for any state in America."

It all sounds wonderfully high-tech and is extremely useful to the field operations of state and federal candidates. But is this what a high-profile fundraiser really wants to spend his time on? One Democratic fundraiser, who wishes to remain anonymous, is convinced that the answer is no. "There's no glamour in putting together a sixteen-page Excel sheet where the highest contribution is two hundred and fifty dollars," he says. McAuliffe, who has been publicly critical of McCain-Feingold, became slightly defensive when

the question was raised. "You're not going to stereotype me as a big-money fundraiser, are you?" he asked. He pointed out that he has been raising hard money (which by definition comes in modest contributions) since 1980, when he served as the finance director for the Carter-Mondale reelection campaign.

Critics of McCain-Feingold lament the fact that the major parties will no longer be able to help candidates by marshaling the support of PACs and other outside groups on their behalf. In the days of soft money, Democratic critics point out, the DNC played a role in unifying the party and moving it toward the center. Without such a clearinghouse, they argue, those running for office will be overly dependent on single-issue groups; this will move candidates of both parties toward the edges, and will advance narrow agendas over common interests. Proponents contend that reducing the power of soft money in party politics will force both parties to go back to their grass roots, which will be good for all voters. Meehan cites a Saint Patrick's Day breakfast he held in Lowell, Massachusetts, attended by 600 people who each contributed \$25, followed by a similar event in Haverhill, another city in his district, attended by 500. "I'm politically stronger because more than a thousand people in the core of my district participated in a fundraising activity," he says. "I think the party in the long term will be helped by returning to grassroots activism, voter turnout, and leafleting."

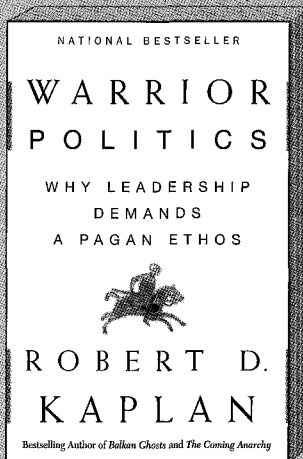
Although the early May ruling that overturned some portions of McCain-Feingold proved to be short-lived, the parties' reactions to it are telling—and they suggest that both opponents and advocates of reform will maintain their views, paradoxical though they may seem, after the Supreme Court renders its decision. Republicans, despite having enjoyed an immediate fundraising advantage under the law, lost no time in rejoicing when it seemed that it would weaken. "I am gratified by much of the court's decision today," Republican Senator Mitch McConnell, of Kentucky, said on May 2. Democrats, having found McCain-Feingold's bite to be sharp indeed, still lamented the apparent blow to the law. Robert Matsui, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee—an organization that once raised enormous amounts of soft money—said, "It is our hope that the Supreme Court will uphold the McCain-Feingold campaign finance law as written." Richard Gephardt said, "I am deeply disappointed that the court has struck down essential provisions ... I sincerely hope the U.S. Supreme Court will review the decision expeditiously and overturn it." Any Democrats who might have been happy about the ruling kept quiet. Having had several months to live with a law that runs counter to their own interests, neither Democrats nor Republicans took the ruling as an opportunity to change sides or even to soften their rhetoric. To the extent to which principles drove the argument from the beginning, they have continued to prevail. ■

Seth Gitell was until recently the chief political writer for the Boston Phoenix.

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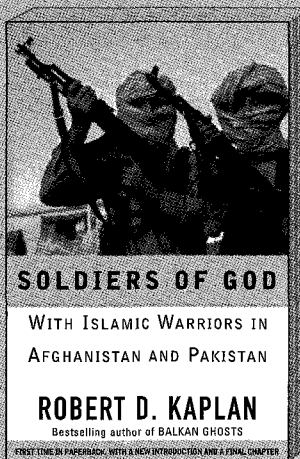


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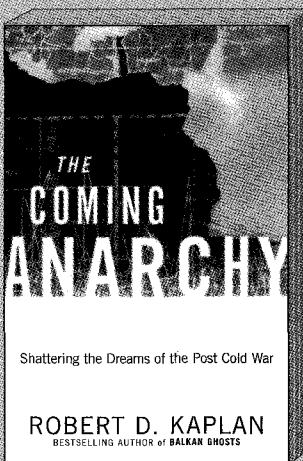
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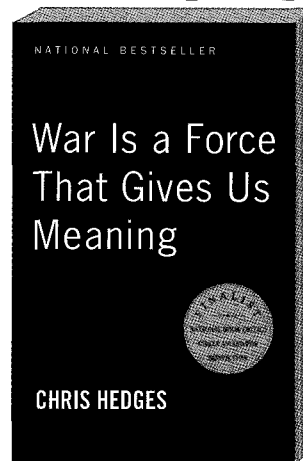
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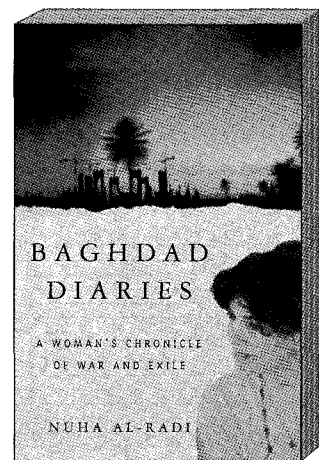
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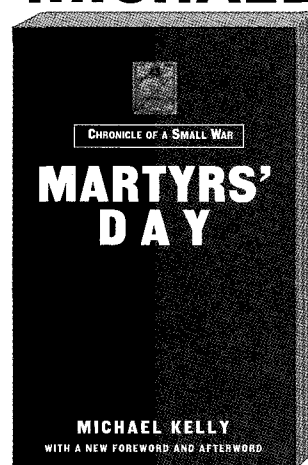
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LOVE ME

A short story

BY GARRISON KEILLOR

Illustrations by Michael Meister

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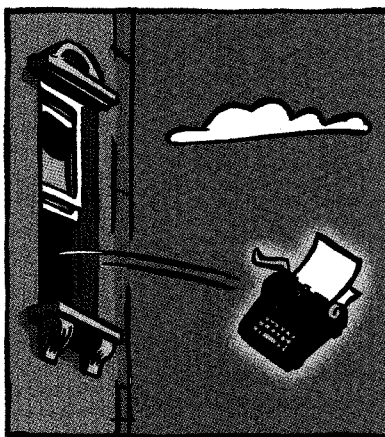
I took a train up to Halifax to write about Canada. I thought Canada would be good for me. Get me out of my slump, which had been going on for more than a year now. But it rained a lot for three days, and I wound up sitting in a bar and drinking Rusty Nails with a Canadian who had a grudge against the United States. I fell into bed like a boxful of hammers and woke up at noon with this great idea, and got on the train to go back to New York and sat in my compartment and wrote a gorgeous broadside against Our Neighbors to the North and said what every American has wanted to say for the past hundred years about Canadian independence—Oh, get off it—and in Portland, Maine, the train stopped and I got off and walked around and used the men's room in the depot and there, in the excitement of creation, I left the manuscript on a ledge next to the urinal and walked to the train and the conductor said, "How's that writing of yours coming along, young fella?" and I let out a yelp and dashed back to the men's room and it was empty. No manuscript. Nothing. I hustled around the waiting room looking in trash barrels. No luck. Finally the whistle blew, and I climbed on the train distraught and went to the club car and had a whiskey soda. First decent thing I write in a whole year and I leave it in the pissoir.

"Something wrong?" the bartender said. "You look down." So I told him.

"Well, that's a shame," he said, as if I'd lost an embroidered hanky or the sports section of the paper instead of a literary creation. A woman with red hair was sitting at the bar. She said, "Just sit down and write the story again. That's what Fitzgerald did when Zelda left the manuscript of *The Great Gatsby* on a train in Zurich. He sat down in a hotel room and wrote it again—and it turned out even better!"

I hate people who give you inspirational advice like that. I loathe them.

A man in a wrinkled brown corduroy suit said, "I heard



that Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* was pitched into the fireplace by an illiterate field hand, and Faulkner proceeded to get drunk and write the whole thing from memory in two days straight."

"Easier said than done," I said.

"The power of memory," the woman said. "T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* fell into a hot bath and the ink washed off and he had to rewrite it, and when he did he made April the cruelest month instead of the 'coolest,' which it had been before. Robert Frost once wrote a

poem that was eaten by a dog who ran off into the woods, chased by the poet, and only then did he decide to change the poem to 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' instead of 'Stopping at the Dew Drop Inn on a Wednesday Night,' which is what it was when the dog ate it."

We were bumping along through New Hampshire, bound for Boston, and the bartender gave me a double whiskey soda, on the house, and the corduroy suit said, "Did you know that Philip Roth's *A Boy's Life* was sent to the cleaners with a box of sweaters and eaten by solvents, and he rewrote it as *Portnoy's Complaint*?"

"You see?" the woman said. "All is not lost."

Mr. Corduroy continued. "And John Updike's *Rabbit Relaxes* was sent by mistake to Tehran in a brown Samsonite suitcase, then New Delhi, Sydney, and Lima, Peru, and only after it returned did he decide that Rabbit maybe shouldn't go to Sun City and get deeply involved in volunteer work. He decided to kill him off and spare the reader."

"Okay," I said. "I get the point."

"Walt Whitman's original manuscript, which he lost, was *Leaves and Grass*. William Carlos Williams lost his poem about the two beers left in the icebox and realized they should be plums."

I stood up to leave.

The bartender chimed in. "Take adversity as an opportunity! Pick yourself up and do better. That's the American

way. You lose your manuscript, you write a better one!"

"But you should've done it right away and not come in here and had two big glasses of Scotch," the woman said. "When Emily Dickinson lost her poem 'Because I could not stop for Lunch' she was at the tennis court with Lavinia, and she didn't spend an hour scouring through the tall grass for a tiny square of folded paper tied with string. She sat right down with a towel around her neck and rewrote it better."

It was depressing, hearing about great writers and how they'd risen to the challenge. A reminder of how little I'd done with my life. No Rabbit books had I brought forth, only an assortment of small black pellets. My big ambition had been to write for *The New Yorker*, and one day—sheer blind luck—I took an antihistamine and two aspirins and some zinc tablets and 5 mg of vitamin E and wrote a thousand words that they bought and published, and then the formula never worked again. A few years later I went to see Mr. Shawn at *The New Yorker* and he and I hit it off big time. We discovered that we both liked a variant of poker called Footsie and were both Stones fans and knew all the words to "Tumbling Dice" and "Brown Sugar." He took me out on his boat, *Shawnee*, and shook up a pitcher of martinis and told me I was trying too hard. "You can't become a writer by reading *Elements of Style*," he said. "You've got to experience life." So I wrote a novel about growing up in the Midwest, my one experience in life, called *Spacious Skies*, and it was pretty successful, but the sequel, *Amber Waves of Grain*, was a stinker. ("What a dumb book!" the *Times* said.) Sales were pitiful. Two weeks after publication big stacks of it were on sale at Barnes & Noble for \$1.89, and the security tags had been removed so as not to hinder shoplifters.

A dumb dumb dumb book. *Why* did I write that long first chapter with *thirty-four* pages all about *soybeans*? And then in Chapter 2 the agronomist, Danny Montalban, suddenly is no longer in Fargo, he's in Fresno, and we're at a lesbian commitment ceremony at a pimento ranch with ladies in denim caftans whanging on little drums and chanting Sapphic things and Cathy and Denise affirming their love for each other and riding away on a piebald pony and then there's that whole thing about the transcontinental railroad and the driving of the golden spike—where did all that come from?

Suddenly I was a joke. I walked down Forty-third Street and heard the word "soybeans" whispered and people tittering.

I was on Seventh Avenue in the Thirties, walking fast to make a lunch date with a woman named Shahtoosh, and a construction guy passed me pushing a handcart piled high with lumber and the cart tipped and a half ton of lumber brushed against my pants leg and crashed to the sidewalk. Had it fallen six inches north it would have snapped my left leg in two. And then Shahtoosh wasn't at the restaurant. She left a message: Sorry. Something came up.

Soybeans. That's what came up. The word was out: Larry Wyler Laid an Egg. Wyler Pissed His Pants.

I was on the B train and a young woman said, "You wrote a book. Right?" I nodded. She said, "I remember your picture from the dust jacket."

"Oh," I said. "Sure."

She said, "You probably get people coming up to you all the time saying they recognize you from your picture."

I said, "No, not that often."

She said, "Really? I would think it would happen a lot."

I said, "Not as often as you might think."

She said, "Well. You learn something new every day."

And we rode on together in silence all the way to Forty-second Street without her ever saying "I loved that book of yours. You're so talented." Nothing of the sort.

My agent, Leona, who had gotten me an advance of a cool one million dollars for *Amber Waves of Grain*, said that the publisher wasn't ready to discuss an advance for a third book, *Purple Mountain Majesties*, quite yet. They were re-examining their options at this point.

Oh, go suck a rock, I thought. But it hurt.

I was okay. My candle still had two good ends left, and I flapped around town like a fruit bat, hanging out with socialites and starlets and literati, feasting off the caviar crevettes on the trays wafted around the room by young men in tuxedos at publishers' parties, hobnobbing, charming the pants off people, and was seldom in bed before 3:00 A.M.

I was famous, or semi-famous. I had loads of offers.

I was invited to be a guest on *Jeopardy!*, to do the voice of Skeezix in the Spielberg adaptation of *Gasoline Alley*, to write 5,000 words about families for *Good Housekeeping*, to write 2,000 words about my most memorable teacher for *Reader's Digest*, to write about Madagascar for *National Geographic*, to serve as honorary chairman of the White House Council on Storytelling, to narrate a documentary about the Lewis and Clark expedition, to appear on the cover of *Newsweek* with children of different races, to tour Europe for the U.S. Information Agency and give a lecture on the American heartland, to host a PBS show about "alternative media" or "really, anything you want to do," to write the text for a book of photographs of childhood homes of American writers, to do commentary at the Winter Olympics, to appear on various TV shows, to host a "Salute to George Plimpton" at Carnegie Hall, to chair the Right to Read committee of the American Library Association, to appear at benefits and serve here and lecture there and write and host and spread the substance of my being like a long grease stain across the breadth of America.

And then, out of left field, came a letter from a woman named Lorna at the *Minneapolis Star Journal* asking me to write an advice column.

"I'm sure you must be extremely busy these days, what with novels and all, but I've admired your work for so long, and I thought, What harm can it do to ask? So I'm asking,

And I just feel from reading your work that you have so much insight to offer people who are going through difficult times, bad romances, career struggles, etc.”

She wanted two columns a week. The readers would send me their letters by e-mail, and I’d edit them and write my responses and e-mail the column to Lorna, and it’d go into the newspaper.

“I know it’s a long shot and you’re probably much too busy,” she wrote, “and we can’t pay much—\$800 per column.”

Actually I wasn’t busy at all. And the thought of writing and seeing my own words in print appealed to me, after my long drought.

I called up Lorna in Minneapolis. She was thrilled.

I said, “Don’t you already have an advice columnist? A Miss Becky? The one who always advises readers to seek professional help?”

“We had her for twenty years and then she took a cruise on the Aegean and had a romance with an Albanian waiter and it didn’t work out and she came home and stuck her head in the oven.”

“I might be able to do it for a thousand,” I said.

“It’s a deal,” she said.

So I became Mr. Blue.

The name came from the hit song by the Make Rites, their one and only hit before they died in a plane crash south of Reno on their way to accept a crummy prize (Best Liner Notes, Male Vocal Group) at the Grammys in L.A.

You’re no good for me, baby,
You’re strychnine in my stew.
Someday you’re going to kill me.
Still I’m in love with you.
Don’t know why I come here.
I shouldn’t but I do.
My life’s a mess but I love you, yes,
I’m your faithful Mr. Blue.

The *Star Journal* printed a quarter-page ad for Ask Mr. Blue (“Lonely? Confused? Angry? Tell your story to Mr. Blue. Offering commonsense answers to life’s persistent questions, twice weekly in the *Star Journal*”), and fifty e-mails arrived instantly, immediately. Lonely was lonely, and Angry was disappointed in love, and Disappointed had a wonderful husband who was crippled by jealousy, and Brokenhearted was missing her boyfriend who was happily dating other people. And a letter from a poet.

Dear Mr. Blue,

How important are schmoozing and politicking in getting one’s poetry published? I’m the author of two collections of poems, and when I show my work to people they say, Oh, that’s nice, but there’s no real respect, as there would be if I had a major publisher instead of Thistle Blossom Chapbooks of Minneapolis. (Don’t print that, please.) I’ve read most of the “major” poets, and frankly I think I’m in that league. I have a very strong suspicion

that if I went to New York and attended the right parties and stood around drinking Sauvignon Blanc with the right people, my stuff might get published pronto. No? Am I kidding myself?

Moonflower

Dear Moonflower,

Enjoy the craft of poetry and leave the art of sucking up and schmoozing to others. But if you want to suck up, don’t apply suction to lower-middle management, which is who drinks white wine. People with real power to get a book of poems into print are gin or bourbon drinkers. Don’t kiss the wrong butt.

Two hours later she wrote again.

Dear Mr. Blue,

I am the poet who wrote you asking how to get published. Please don’t print that letter. Everybody I know will know it’s me. Could you print the following instead:

Dear Mr. Blue,

I am single, forty-one, attractive, fun to be with (according to friends), and well educated, and my life is going nowhere. I want to fall in love with the right man and settle down. I dated a Norwegian man and he was so taciturn it took me two years to find out that he was married with children. I joined a church and got involved in community activities, and now I know a lot of other single women in their forties and fifties, but I want someone to come home to and snuggle with. Is that so impossible?

Moonflower

Dear Moonflower,

The supply of available heterosexual men who are psychologically sound is small. You’re hunting for mountain goats, basically, so you probably need a guide, someone who knows a goat personally. The truth is that men hate to be single. So they hang onto a mate until another comes along. They hate to be at sea, so they hug the coast, and a woman in search of a man is forced to become a pirate, drifting through the knots of married couples, letting the men appreciate her charms, her openness, her lovely skin, her insouciance, her availability, and letting the women loathe and despise her. I don’t recommend that, but it’s been practiced successfully by many women who thereby became somebody’s second or third wife, and there is an advantage to buying a horse that’s already broken and accustomed to the traces. But never mind. You are not that sort of person, thank goodness. But just in case you should change your mind, be sure to pay attention to your physical person. “Attractive” isn’t enough when you’re forty-one. You need to be a knockout. A woman men look at and think *Wow*. Don’t waste your time on the subtleties; you have two powerful assets, located on your chest, and you’d be a fool not to use them. A little décolletage—or a lot,

what the heck, Christmas is coming—can work for you. If you want to attract a man, unbutton your blouse. You can discuss books afterward. Boobs come first. I could lie about this, but why?

The lady at the *Star Journal* edited out the boobs, but the rest stayed in.

Dear Mr. Blue,

I am an orthodontist, thirty-one, good-looking, athletic, and though I have dated many so-called "attractive" women, I've never been in a relationship. I simply don't care for women who let themselves go. You take her to a gourmet restaurant and as your eyes adjust to the light, you notice the ruptured canker sore in the corner of her mouth. Or the hairs sprouting between her eyebrows. Or the zit alongside her nose. I just can't feature myself spending time with anyone with so little self-respect. Am I off base here?

Eric of Edina

Dear Eric,

You need women for education, flawed or not. The maiden with little snow-white feet, the one with black black hair, Barbary Allen, the gypsy girl, Kathleen Mavourneen, Jeannie, Fair Ellen—each woman prepares you for the next. You learn the basics from Lady A and you graduate to Lady B, who is grateful to her predecessor, as are C and D and E, and by F you are quite a fine fellow, mostly recovered from your sulky adolescence and rapacious narcissism and prepared to carry on a conversation, brighten your corner, do light housekeeping, and every so often perform amazing feats in or near the bed.

The danger is that you may turn to the woman you're with and say, "Remember that little bar in the West Sixties where we went after we saw *A Chorus Line* and there was that pianist with the bad toupee playing the white piano?" and she says, "That wasn't me. You were with someone else." But secretly she's grateful to that woman for teaching you whatever she taught you.

You've cheated yourself of an education, sir. Take off your glasses.

Other than Mr. Blue, I couldn't write a lick. I roamed Manhattan, looking for little vignettes of city life, taking notes:

A water main breaks and police cordon off the block, lights flashing, traffic barriers, people stand in little groups talking about it.

Enormous corporate towers and nearby are hole-in-the-wall shops where you can get passport photos or have something copied or get your nails done or cash a check or buy incense or maybe all five.

Women go around alone, day or night, and as a defense they develop an expression that is the facial equivalent of a wall. If you come from Minnesota, where you expect people to smile at you, this can be a jolt. And it's meant to be.

The ads on the subway aren't for BMWs or ski resorts, they're for hemorrhoid treatments and what to do about sore feet, bunions, bad skin, bad teeth, drug addiction. One for *detergente*, with the phrase *blanquear tan blanco* ("whiter than white"), not such a useful phrase to know in New York.

Where Broadway slices across 44th and Seventh Avenue you can look into six different canyons of glass and stone hundreds of feet tall and covered with brilliant flashing signs, news banners, rivers of people moving along; it's the most amazing sight in America.

In other cities, when the President comes to town, people feel sort of happy and honored and wonder if they'll get to see him. In New York people feel a sense of dread, especially on the East Side, where the UN is and the Waldorf and there is only one subway line. The arrival of the President is, for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, a natural disaster, a sort of blizzard.

I accumulated piles of notes. I began a memoir (*A Boyhood on the Mississippi*) and wrote a few thousand words about fishing and rafts and camping on islands, but Mark Twain had done it so much better, so I dropped it and tried writing a piece about Forty-fourth Street when it rains and the taxis glisten as they race through the puddles and the hotel doormen hold their big umbrellas over the elderly couple looking anxiously up the street, late for their flight home to Cleveland, in the midst of which I began a profile of Arthur Godfrey, only to realize that he'd been dead since 1983.

I thought about writing about the ukulele, or Hawaiian cooking. And then Jane Wyman. The YMCA. Jack Dempsey. Dumpsters. Teamsters. Hamsters. Hamilton Jordan. Jergens lotion. The Locomotion. Perry Como. Barium. Syngman Rhee. Ralph Reed. Ralph Stanley. Stan Musial. The musical *Oklahoma!* The Make Rites.

One horrible night, desperate to loosen things up, I took a tab of acid in an Oreo and I saw green and orange neon lights, parrots, Roman candles, violet wallpaper, sopranos, rivers of taxicabs. I was talking to Baudelaire. My ears were ringing. And the next day a doorman came up with the four notebooks I had thrown over the railing, which almost hit an old lady on the street. The notebooks were pure gibberish. A gibbon would have done as well.

I was paralyzed. Locked into failure. I kept trying and trying, but you come up to bat with 156 consecutive strike-outs and the bleacher crowd is chanting, "Hey, hey, Mister K!" and no matter how you try to steady yourself (*Visualize success. Accept good fortune. Open your arms to it. Swing from the hips*), you feel that chill in your shorts and you no sooner get settled at the plate than ZOOM comes the ball and it's *steeeee-riike ONE* and you think, "Okay, here we go again. Hello, failure." *Steeeee-riike TWO, steeeee-riike THREE*. And you turn and walk back to the dugout, feeling some sense of completion.

Once I went to Siegfried's for a haircut (\$85), the salon where my hero John Updike got his hair cut, the most productive writer in America, and there amid the stylish young hair designers in black jeans and T-shirts was an old bar-



her named Earl whose hands were shaky, and before I knew it he'd mowed my scalp to stubble and I had to go to a place called Domenico's House of Hair and buy a small, unconvincing toupee.

Dear Mr. Blue,
My wife used to be a federal judge, and we were all terribly proud of her, and then, after ten years on the bench, she took a sabbatical to "explore her identity," and now she is a ballet rollerblader. She is fifty-one. She has resigned her judgeship so that she can go off to senior women's amateur tournaments all over the country and compete. She has never won anything above honorable mention. She used to have opinions on literature and politics and culture, but now she is totally dedicated to leaps and figure eights and the double axel. She is a full-figured gal, not a slender little thing, and I hate to see her humiliate herself skating around in a skimpy little skirt and blouse like a circus bear. Deep down I am losing respect for her. Why is she doing this?

At the End of My Rope

Dear Rope,

Your wife got tired of people being proud of her and decided she doesn't care if anybody stands up at her memorial service and talks about her legacy of public service or not, she would rather get some fun out of life. She enjoys blading. So she decided to blade. What don't you understand about this? I have devoted most of my adult life to writing stories,

and now, in late middle age, I've washed up on a reef and can't write for shit. I must say that ballet rollerblading strikes me as entirely honorable and useful compared with what I'm doing now. Maybe you should dance in your wife's blades before you get down on her like this.

Dear Mr. Blue,

Is it mere coincidence that the word "therapist" also makes the words "the rapist"? My psychiatrist Jekyll is giving me the creeps, milking prurient details out of me about my love affairs with older men with big eyebrows. I got to talking about my latest lover and Jekyll got all curious, whereas he shows not a glimmer of interest in the fact that I am a compulsive hand-washer and have a thing about chickens. I am a successful career woman (a county prosecutor, but don't print that in the paper), but I have forty-three sets of bed sheets and pillowcases with chickens on them. Sixteen chicken tablecloths. A recorded rooster awakens me every morning. I have a Leghorn chicken night light. If I don't wash my hands at least three times an hour, I become anxious. Jekyll could care less about all this. All he's interested in is stories about sex. I'd like to just walk away from him, but I don't know if my self-esteem can take another shot in the chops.

I'm a good person. I am on the board of an organization that tutors inner-city kids, I volunteer, I take public transportation to work. But in addition to my chicken and hand-washing compulsions, I have this other compulsion to run up to fat people and say cruel things to them. For example:

What do you keep in those creases?

Need me to get something out of your back pocket?

Ever think about buying group insurance for yourself?

Where'd you get baptized? Sea World?

I asked Jekyll, "Why do I get such happiness from poking fun at these porkers?" and he shrugged and said, "Tell me more about Dale and your weekend in Duluth." The other morning, on the bus, I said to a black lady who was occupying two seats, "Who paints your toenails? The guy at the auto-body shop?" I live in fear that I will be caught someday and it'll get in the papers and my mother will disown me. Mom is the most important person in the world to me. She's a little hefty herself. In fact, the only way we can get her out of the house is to grease the door frame and stand outside holding a Twinkie. I know it would break her heart if she knew that I was inflicting gratuitous pain on blimps and wide-rides. Should I get a new therapist?

Nice Lady

Dear Nice,

Yes. Your abuse of the obese is protected by the First Amendment, but what if some fatty fell on you in anger and you had to go in the hospital for back surgery and then physical therapy and still your back didn't feel good and you got depressed and turned to baked goods for comfort, and not just the occasional cheese Danish but whole jumbo bags from Krispy Kreme that you sat in your full-size car and devoured greedily until one day you saw a porker in

the mirror trying to avert her eyes and you could say, "Hey, for a fat lady, you don't sweat much."

Dear Mr. Blue,

I've been dating a wonderful woman and last night I invited her up to my apartment and we were sitting on the sofa which is also a fold-out bed and I was kissing the side of her neck and she asked me if I minded if she said a prayer. I said, "No, not if that's what you want, Evelyn." She prayed for God to show us the path He was planning for us and to teach us to honor each other, and she prayed to be fruitful and bring forth a large family and teach them to love the Lord, Amen. I said, "But we aren't even married, Evelyn." And she said, "My papa will take care of that as soon as he finds out I'm pregnant." Then I noticed her black bonnet. I honestly never realized until then that she was Amish. Anyway, I felt that even if God's plan is for me to be the daddy of twelve, it's not my plan, so I put away the bottle of Kama Sutra scented oil and today I am feeling rotten. How can I introduce her to contraceptives? Would alcohol help?

Secular Humanist

Dear Secular,

You two aren't on the same page of the hymnal. Tell her good-bye. And be glad you discovered her Amishness now and not after you'd been married for a couple of years, as happens so often. You turn to your wife, a loyal, brave, industrious person, and say, "How about we go tie on the feedbag in some swell eatery, Snuggums?" and she says, "Thee shouldst save against the rainy day that surely cometh." And suddenly you find yourself in the eighteenth century, having to deal with smallpox and ague and dropsy, horrible roads, rationalism, cold damp houses, and your life expectancy drops to about thirty-eight. And you're thirty-six at the time.

As for alcohol as an engine of seduction, dosage is critical: women tend to be slight creatures, not Percherons, and a big glass of hooch may overshoot the mark and reduce her level of judgment to where her affection for you doesn't mean all that much. It's much smarter to make yourself appealing and win her interest: the reward will be greater than if she is limp and semiconscious. Making oneself appealing is what led to civilization as we know it: poetry, music, sport, learning—it all began as romance. Men wrote songs and sang them while plucking a lute, all in hopes of impressing the opposite sex. This isn't going to impress an Amish woman, though, so find a nice Episcopalian and be as charming as you can.

Dear Mr. Blue,

My mother is married to the man who killed my father. He (Dad) had gone away to avenge my uncle, whose wife, Helen, had been stolen away by some Trojan people, and then this man fell in love with my mother. When my dad came back, this man killed him, and he and my mom married. Anyway, my brother,

who lives far away from here, has vowed to kill our stepdad and Mom. He is very upset. I am going nuts. Any suggestions?

Electra

Dear Electra,

I must speak frankly now and tell you that I see no reason for you to make this into a bigger deal than it already is. Too bad you're Greek and not American. Here in the U.S.A. we believe that problems are an opportunity. Take that stone in your shoe and make soup from it. Okay, life is tough, but we dispel the shadows with a song. Little things can make you happy. (In fact, it's always little things that make you happy.)

People are meant to live, love, laugh, and be happy. That's the quintessential American rule: be happy. We're optimists. Leave agonized introspection to the Swedes and cynicism to the French and weltschmerz to the Berliners and *Ich bin nicht ein Berliner*. Problems can be solved, and if not, ignore them. Play it for laughs.

When I was your age, I, too, thought that life is a tragedy. I entertained morbid fears of drowning inside a car, or suffocating in a coffin, or having my skull fractured by a giant vise operated by evil apes, or dying on a train derailed on a high trestle over a rocky gorge, or going to the electric chair at Sing Sing, or skidding off the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and my car exploding in a fireball to the horror of thousands of Japanese tourists.

And then I learned that music can dispel dread. And so can sex. So can a beef sirloin slightly charred on the outside and reddish pink in the middle, nicely peppered, with mustard aioli. And a good night's sleep, eight hours of Zs in a room with a window open and a salt breeze blowing in.

Fresh melon from a roadside stand. An endive and pear and blue cheese salad. A rousing Broadway musical with some classy comic turns and a winsome leading lady and a terrific tap routine in Act II and a grand finale with the whole ensemble dancing with faces aglow and hands in the air. A good medicinal martini with a fellow martinist. Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five. A fine Episcopal mass in a modest and sunny sanctuary with a big banner (LOVE IS TRIUMPHANT) hanging in back and the organist plays quietly and the choir hangs together on the anthem and the homily is concise and you confess your sins and feel them lifted from your back and you commune with the Lord and come away from His Table filled with grace and walk out into the sunny world feeling that you have a fresh chance at life. And the snooze during the reading of the Scriptures is good too.

A lot of things can make you happy. A good ball game, score tied, bases loaded, two out, bottom of the ninth, and the local hero punches a double into the right-field corner and the crowd rises, yelling, happy. Walking around New York City on a summer night. Walking around the Minnesota State Fair. The *St. Matthew Passion* and a big choir leaning into it like sled dogs on the tundra.

Time stands still when the past never leaves.

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adaptation by Edwin Sherin
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Mr. Shawn gave me some good advice once when we were golfing at the Westchester Country Club. Some people thought of him as a legendary reclusive editor who obsessed over commas, but I knew him as a guy who took a good swing and lived by the results. The man could make music with a putter, I must say.

It was the eighteenth hole and he was whomping the bejiggers out of me and he had just hit a beautiful drive that flew straight and true and rolled and rolled, a huge shot, and then a five-iron straight to the green, fifteen feet below the cup.

Meanwhile, I had topped my drive and sent it skittering twenty yards or so and then went on an expedition into the neighboring fairways and landed on the green in ten. He said to me, "Writers like to think that writing is like Arctic exploration or flying the Atlantic solo, but actually it's more like golf. You've got to just do it and be happy. Some writers spend twenty minutes lining up a four-foot putt. Some writers pitch a tent on the green and stay for a week and brood about friction and energy and the gender of their putter. What's the problem? Take your shot. It's no shame to bogey. Just do it and have a good time. Don't base your whole life on worrying about whether you're any good or not. If you need to know, you shouldn't be playing this game." And he tapped the ball and it snaked across the turf and caught the corner of the cup and fell in for a birdie, and he chuckled a low warm chuckle and then it took me four putts to traverse the six feet to the cup, a sort of star-shaped putt, and we trundled off to the clubhouse. Not the greatest round I ever shot, but I am still in the game.

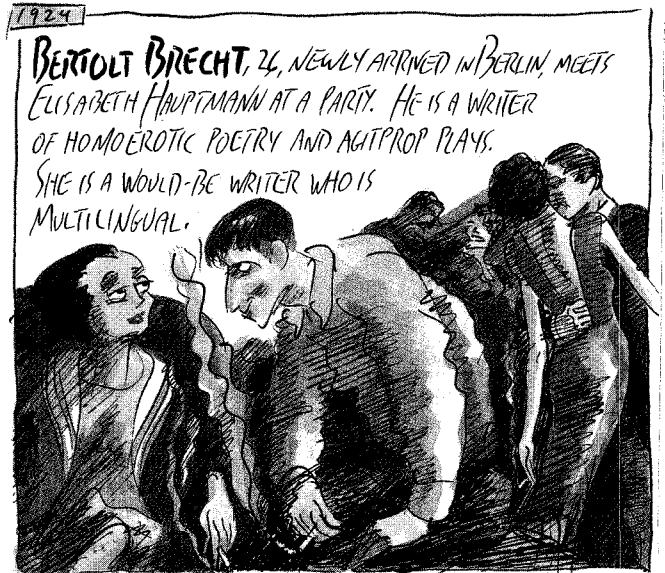
Lorna at the *Star Journal* sent me an e-mail.

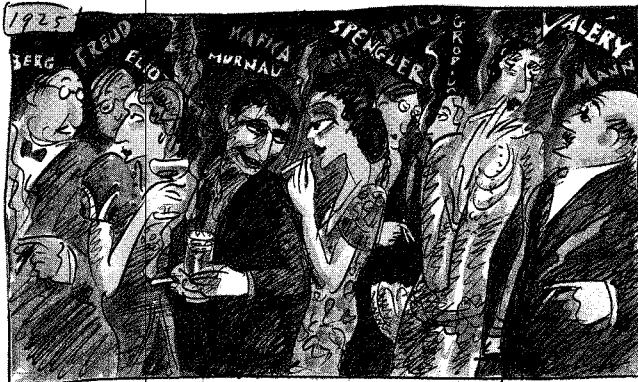
Everybody loves it. You've made me a heroine here at the paper. Nobody thought I could ever persuade the great Larry Wyler to write for us, and then I did, and now people are stopping me in the halls to say thank you. I hope that Mr. Blue isn't taking you away from your other work, though.

Oh, my dear lady, you don't distract me from my work. Mr. Blue is my work. I looked half my life for this work. The meaning of life is, first, to earn a living. You may be digging your own grave, but if you dig it straight and deep and they pay you, it's honest work. I believe in work. I was wasting time being lonely and drinking too much and making late-night phone calls to friends and writing long weepy letters and suffering gruesome hangovers and getting crushes on waitresses in coffee shops and enduring paralysis, and yet—I am still in the game. I'm Mr. Blue. ■

Garrison Keillor is the host of A Prairie Home Companion, on public radio on Saturday nights. This story is drawn from his novel Love Me, to be published by Viking Penguin in September.

Edward Sorel is a regular contributor to The Atlantic. Unauthorized Portraits (1997) is the most recent of several collections of his work. In 2001 the Art Directors Club elected him to its Hall of Fame.





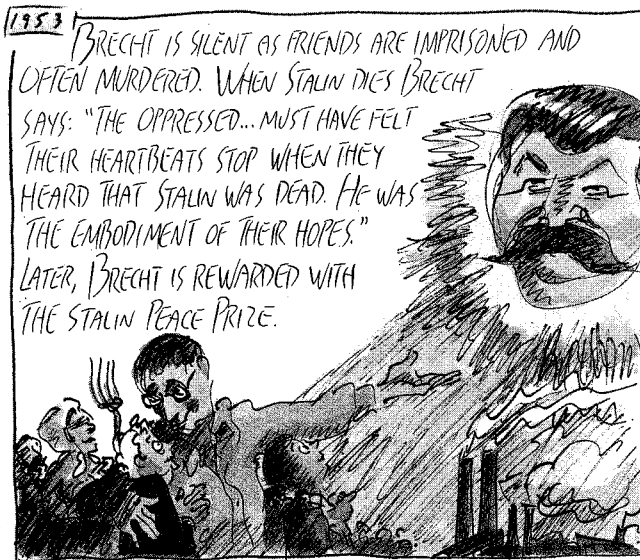
THEY BECOME COLLABORATORS AS WELL AS LOVERS. NOW MOST OF WHAT BRECHT SELLS AS HIS OWN IS WRITTEN BY HAUPTMANN. HER ONLY REWARD IS BEING ALLOWED TO BE WITH HIM AT THE CENTER OF BERLIN'S LITERARY LIFE.



INSTEAD HE MARRIES HELENE WEIGEL. HAUPTMANN ATTEMPTS SUICIDE, AS DOES ANOTHER MISTRESS WHO EXPECTED MARRIAGE. NOW WEALTHY, BRECHT HAS THE BENEFITS OF A HOME, THE JOYS OF THE CASTING COUCH, AND THE ADORATION OF Nubile POLITICAL ACTIVISTS.



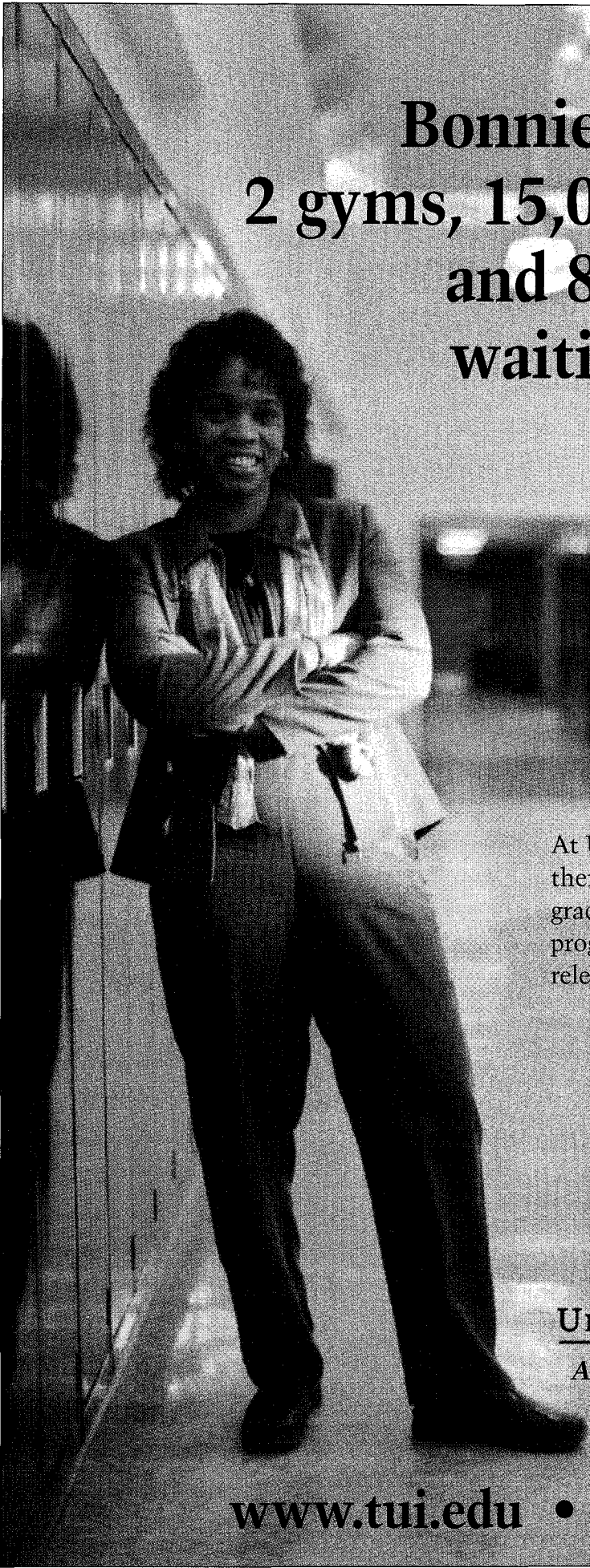
WEEKS BEFORE HITLER TAKES POWER, BRECHT SHOCKS FRIENDS BY INVITING RIGHT-WINGERS TO HIS ANNUAL STAG NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY, AND JOINING THEM IN A TOAST TO "A SUCCESSFUL AND BLOODLESS PUTSCH FROM THE RIGHT."



BRECHT IS SILENT AS FRIENDS ARE IMPRISONED AND OFTEN MURDERED. WHEN STALIN DIES BRECHT SAYS: "THE OPPRESSED... MUST HAVE FELT THEIR HEARTBEATS STOP WHEN THEY HEARD THAT STALIN WAS DEAD. HE WAS THE EMBODIMENT OF THEIR HOPES." LATER, BRECHT IS REWARDED WITH THE STALIN PEACE PRIZE.



BRECHT DIES, AND IS HAILED AS A CHAMPION OF THE WORKING MAN. HE LEAVES BEHIND AN ESTATE WORTH MILLIONS, THREE CONFLICTING WILLS, AND A SMALL ARMY OF GHOSTWRITERS (INCLUDING HAUPTMANN) STILL WAITING FOR PAYMENT.



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Bonnie Johnson-Aten is pursuing a degree in education and a license in leadership and administration at Vermont College of Union Institute & University. She brings expertise in anti-bias and diversity education to her job as a high school dean of students and to her studies. Her dedication to inclusive education benefits every student with whom she interacts.

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BOOKS & CRITICS

THIS MONTH:

**Thinking Like
an Apparatchik**

"It's difficult for some people to understand, or to remember, how desperate the scene in 1992 must have looked to a professional Democratic insider approaching if not confronting middle age. [In] the making of Presidents the Democrats appeared to have run out of human material. And then..." Christopher Hitchens takes a personal interest in the historical veracity of Sidney Blumenthal's *The Clinton Wars*. PAGE 129

Scandalmonger

What Was She Thinking?
by Zoë Heller, reviewed
by James Marcus PAGE 143

Rock On

*All Shook Up: How Rock
N' Roll Changed America*, by
Glenn C. Altschuler, reviewed
by Eric Alterman PAGE 143

Just the Facts

The Photograph, by
Penelope Lively, reviewed
by Elizabeth Judd PAGE 144

She-devil

The Devil Wears Prada, by
Lauren Weisberger, reviewed
by Caitlin Flanagan PAGE 146

The Poetry of Heartbreak

"When Robert Lowell's *Lord Weary's Castle* appeared, in 1946, the sheer gorgeousness and encrusted bookishness of this poetry startled readers used to the plain talk of Robert Frost and William Carlos Williams." Peter Davison reviews *Robert Lowell: Collected Poems*, edited by Frank Bidart and David Gewanter. PAGE 147

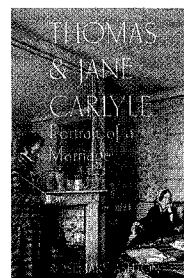
NEW & NOTEWORTHY

What to read this month

BY BENJAMIN SCHWARZ

.....

Thomas Carlyle—the once celebrated but now unread Victorian sage—was gloomy, clumsy, pedantic, and literally (and otherwise) flatulent. His wife, Jane, was bitter, sardonic, brilliant (a guest informed her, "You would be a vast deal more amiable if you were not so *damnably* clever"), and intellectually frustrated. His marriage proposal to her, not one to set a heart aflutter ("Together we may fail to be happy; separate, we can hardly fail to be miserable"), nicely set the tone for their less than cheerful matrimonial life. Indeed, Samuel Butler famously thanked God for letting the Carlyles marry each other "and so make only two people miserable instead of four." But this notoriously unhappy union is among the most compelling in literary history, because in their letters and journals these two wrote slyly, caustically, and endlessly about their intellectual and political world and, more important, about themselves and their marriage (subjects they obviously—and charmingly—found ceaselessly absorbing). More than 9,000 of their letters survive, making theirs probably the most minutely and intelligently documented marriage ever. (Letter writing was the ideal vehicle for Jane's waspish wit; although Thomas is rightly castigated for his narcissistic insensitivity to his wife, one suspects that he provided her with the irritant necessary for her peculiar literary pearls.) A number of writers—most notably Thea Holme, in *The Carlyles at Home*, and Phyllis Rose, in *Parallel Lives*—have rendered sensitive, if at times anachronistic, portraits of this marriage. But these have been miniatures; Rosemary Ashton works on a broad canvas. A fluent scholar and a lively writer, she has absorbed everything the Carlyles wrote, and seemingly everything written about them by their contemporaries (they were by far the most famous literary couple of the century). Eschewing flabby generalization and unfounded speculation, she depicts and analyzes their partnership with precision, and also with fairness and detachment (quite an achievement, especially when assessing the sullen, windy, and often simply impossible Thomas). Ashton's 550-page book is, as its subtitle promises, a portrait of a marriage, but it's perforce also a portrait of an age, because it puts the couple where they belong if one is to understand them at all: at the very center of the Victorian intellectual and literary elite. There they argue, flirt, and gossip



THOMAS &
JANE CARLYLE:
PORTRAIT OF
A MARRIAGE
by Rosemary Ashton
Pimlico/Trafalgar
Square

with—and exasperate—the luminaries of their time, including Dickens, John Stuart Mill, George Eliot, Darwin, Thackeray, Ruskin, Emerson, Goethe, and Giuseppe Mazzini.

LITERARY STUDIES

A VISIT TO DON OTAVIO, by *Sybil Bedford* (Counterpoint). Bedford—that fantastically glamorous, cosmopolitan writer—spent the Second World War penned up in Manhattan; before her return to England she “had a great longing to move, to hear another language, eat new food; to be in a country with a long nasty history in the past and as little present history as possible.” So she traveled through Mexico with a woman friend. She took no notes, but she sent postcards; when she got back to London, she called her correspondents to collect those cards and started writing. The result was this, her first book and—by wide agreement—one of the great works of travel literature. Bedford is a hard, even somewhat cynical writer, but she “wanted to make something light and poetic,” and her sharp eye and precise language allowed her to fashion this enormously sensuous work. (Bruce Chatwin declared, “When the history of modern prose in English comes to be written, Mrs. Bedford will have to appear in any list of its most dazzling practitioners.” Without question.) Sporadically out of print, it has just been reissued. Buy and read this marvel.

THE UNWRITTEN WAR, by *Daniel Aaron* (Alabama). This book, published in 1973 and out of print for several years, has now been reissued. Although a valuable survey of the literary legacy of the Civil War, a subject of staggering cultural and historical importance, the book will always be overshadowed by one of the very few masterpieces of American literary history and criticism, Edmund Wilson’s *Patriotic Gore*, written eleven years earlier, which explored the same territory (albeit in a far more idiosyncratic fashion). Aaron, now a professor emeritus at Harvard, explicates the impact of the war on writers from Hawthorne and Melville to Faulkner and the Nashville Agrarians

(his assessment of the Agrarians is by far the shallowest and most hostile chapter in the book; generally this liberal Yankee is at a loss when he strays below the Mason-Dixon line). Yet he very oddly neglects the two greatest writers of the war itself—Lincoln and Grant. And although his analyses of individual authors are often keen, he stumbles badly in his overall thesis. In his introduction he states, “One would expect writers . . . to say something revealing about the meaning, if not the causes, of the War,” and he argues implicitly throughout his book that in fact “writers”—by which he means fiction writers and poets—failed to do so. But



why would we look to imaginative writers, as Aaron does, for what he calls “historical insight”? The *Iliad*, after all, is hardly an exposition of the meaning and causes of the Trojan War. Aaron is clearly disappointed in Ambrose Bierce when he writes that Bierce’s “response to the War had always been intensely personal, never philosophical”; but isn’t a personal response precisely what we want from a writer of essays and short stories? Puzzled that novelists and poets neglected to approach their subject as historical philosophers (and, it would seem, annoyed that they failed to impose on the war the “meaning” he finds in it), Aaron offers a nebulous, and what we would now characterize as a PC, explanation: “Race,” he asserts, “blurr[ed] literary insight.” He uses the fact that African-Americans figured only marginally in the literature of the war as evidence that writers were psychologically resistant to confronting the racial aspect of the conflict (which to him is its central aspect). The “literary dearth,” Aaron

avers, “is to be accounted for by the blocking out of race.” Well, maybe. But Aaron himself seems to be lacking in historical insight: the preoccupations of the present, he ought to know, should not be exported to the past.

HISTORY

INTERESTING TIMES, by *Eric Hobsbawm* (Pantheon). Hobsbawm is one of the ten or twelve greatest historians since the Second World War. But as these memoirs show, he is also self-regarding and obscenely wrongheaded. His reputation as a scholar and a writer rests largely on three books—*The Age of Revolution*, *The Age of Capital*, and *The Age of Empire*—that together form a magisterial history of what he calls “the long nineteenth century” (1789–1914). That history, described by *The Observer* as “part of the mental furniture of educated Englishmen,” is concerned with long-term economic trends and broad secular patterns, not with great men and dramatic events. (His more recent *Age of Extremes*, his biggest seller and an intelligent history of the global economy in “the short twentieth century,” 1914–1991, lacks the depth and verve of his nineteenth-century history.) But Hobsbawm’s standing has always been based as much on his political affiliation as on his literary accomplishments. A communist from 1932 until 1991, he remained loyal to Moscow through the Terror Famine, the Great Terror, and the show trials; through the Hitler-Stalin Pact; through Khrushchev’s exposure of Stalin’s crimes; through the Soviets’ suppression of Czechoslovakia in 1949, of Hungary in 1956, and of Czechoslovakia again in 1968. He devotes a large part of his autobiography—certainly the most engaging sections, and certainly those that got the most attention from reviewers and commentators in Britain, where the book was first published last year—to explaining this long-standing allegiance. That explanation amounts in large part to conflating anti-fascism and the struggle for social justice, on the one hand, and the communist movement, on the other. (In his highly selective and romantic defense of communism he even suggests that East German

apparatchiks “devote[d] their lives” to “the ideals of freedom and justice.”) This apologia, of course, dishonors the past century’s intellectually honest men and women of the left who recognized that the October Revolution was rotten and murderous from its inception and who fought for freedom and justice and against both fascist and Soviet tyranny. Add to this affront Hobsbawm’s arrogant ignorance of the United States (he applies David Rousset’s term for the Nazi death camps—“*univers concentrationnaire*”—to the U.S. prison system) and self-important passages like the one in which he implies that his own writings contributed to the Third World’s wave of democratization in the 1980s, and you may find yourself—as I did more than once—hurling this book across the room.

CURZON, by David Gilmour (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). George Curzon (1859–1925) was seemingly marked for greatness. Dubbed, with envy and irritation, “a most superior person” by his contemporaries at Balliol, the aristocratic striver won a fellowship to All Souls, traveled widely, wrote scholarly tomes on the Near East, and was the most glittering figure in England’s most glittering social set (where he conducted a series of affairs with some of the most prominent married women in the kingdom). All this before he was twenty-seven, when he was elected to Parliament. Five years later he became under-secretary for India. At thirty-nine he secured what was probably the most powerful appointed position in the world: he became Viceroy of India, the ruler of almost 300 million people. The youngest man ever to hold that title, Curzon was, for better and worse, perfect for the job. Since his days at Eton this prodigious worker had essentially spent his intellectual life preparing for it; no politician knew more about India and its neighbors. He and Cromer of Egypt were the most capable, briskly efficient, and high-minded imperial administrators at the apogee of the British empire. As for the worse, no one could possibly have been temperamentally better suited to pseudo-sovereignty. Pompous, supercilious, self-pitying,

pedantic, and meddlesome, Curzon possessed outstanding abilities, but they were all but eclipsed by his pestiferousness. His unusual capacity for treading on important toes and creating enemies destroyed his brilliant viceroyalty. Although an effective Cabinet minister during the First World War and Foreign Secretary in the early 1920s, he had alienated too many in his party to achieve his ultimate goal, the prime ministership, and he died a disappointed man. This distinguished and immensely accomplished failure has been enormously fortunate in his biographers. Harold Nicolson, who worked for Curzon at the Foreign Office, wrote a characteristically astute and elegant account of him as Foreign Secretary (*Curzon: The Last Phase*); Kenneth Rose, in *Superior Person*, gave a sparkling portrait of Curzon’s early years and of the interlocking social, intellectual, and political elite that formed his circle; David Dilks, in his two-volume *Curzon in India*, offered a rich study of nearly every aspect of his viceroyalty. But until now no single work adequately chronicled Curzon’s entire life. Gilmour’s absorbing, intelligent, quizzical, and stylish biography covers with equal authority and panache late-Victorian country-house weekends, maneuverings within the War Cabinet, and the background of the Treaty of Lausanne. (A typical aside: “The best years of the Curzons’ marriage were spent in India. They were often apart and, when together, were seldom alone.”) But the focal point of this 684-page book is, as it must be, Curzon’s years as Viceroy. No clearer and more vivid account has been written of the high point of the Raj—its workaday management as well as its pomp.

GERMANY’S WAR AND THE HOLOCAUST, by Omer Bartov (Cornell). Scholarship on the Holocaust continues to swell. And, inevitably, so do the scholarly debates and controversies—some silly, some complicated, a few actually important. Despite its annoyingly clumsy prose, Bartov’s collection of previously published but extensively revised articles is among the most accessible books for the layman hoping to understand the contours of the current historiography.



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Bartov established his reputation in 1985 with a truly pathbreaking study, *The Eastern Front, 1941-45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare*, which demonstrated conclusively that, contrary to the self-serving reminiscences of German veterans, the German army—not just the SS and other Nazi ideologues—had willingly, even enthusiastically, participated in the slaughter of Soviet civilians and in the attempted extermination of the Jews. (He extended and deepened his conclusions in *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich*.) Not surprisingly, some of the most astute essays here examine various aspects of the Wehrmacht's complicity in the Holocaust. While avoiding an easy judgmental stance, Bartov draws nuanced but crucial distinctions between wartime atrocities generally (including those of the other combatant states of the Second World War) and those that Germany committed, especially on the Eastern Front, which were, as he shows with precision, uniquely terrible. (This is an especially significant discussion given the proclivity of some German revisionist historians for drawing facile parallels between the crimes of Nazi Germany and those of Stalin's Soviet Union.) Although Bartov is an innovative military historian, in his essay on the diaries of the great German conservative, patriot, and Jew Victor Klemperer he also displays a subtle grasp of social and cultural developments, especially the growing, and in the end nearly total, Nazification of German society under the Third Reich.

BESSIE, by *Chris Albertson* (Yale). In 1972 the first edition of this book was broadly hailed as the finest jazz biography ever written, but it was flawed. The writing in this revised edition, which includes new interview material, remains ham-fisted, and Albertson still offers no sophisticated explanation for the source and development of Smith's stupendous musical gift (the influence—or lack thereof—of Ma Rainey, the “Mother of the Blues,” on Smith's style and phrasing goes essentially unexplored). Albertson nevertheless gives us a remarkably clear-eyed examination of Smith's personality (and sexuality) and, more important, of

the gritty and greedy music business. The milieu in which Smith worked was devoid of saints, but the least appealing characters in the book turn out to be the New York white liberals who applauded and exploited her. Carl Van Vechten, a forerunner of radical chic, emerges as superficial and lecherous. Even worse is the widely but not astutely admired producer John Hammond, who, if not knowingly then certainly irresponsibly, originated and disseminated the (as Albertson meticulously shows) apocryphal story that Smith's death was the result of a Mississippi hospital's racist policy. Although Albertson disproved that legend more than thirty years ago, it refuses to die; today Smith is perhaps better remembered for the misrepresented circumstances of her death than for her hard and heartrending music.

IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES, by *Edward L. Ayers* (Norton). Ayers scrutinizes the effect of the Civil War and of the debates that preceded it on two communities—Augusta County, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania, 200 miles away. In so doing he illuminates both the similarities that existed and the striking differences that developed between the North and the South before and during the conflict. His approach—exploring the impact of public events on daily life, and juxtaposing battlefield and home front—gives readers a fuller picture than they'd obtain from a more conventional micro-history. But Ayers—who has written two superb scholarly studies of the post-Civil War South—falters with his pseudo-literary devices and diction. Throughout, his narrative ambitions exceed his writerly abilities, and the means he uses to unite close-ups and wide perspective (he explicitly embraces a cinematic vocabulary) make for a flabby book. To combine the local and the national, for instance, he'll often supply lengthy summaries of local newspapers' reports of faraway events. Add to these defects Ayers's surprisingly jejune conclusions and this work, although sometimes engrossing, becomes disappointing and a bit pretentious. **A**

Benjamin Schwarz is the literary editor of The Atlantic.

THINKING LIKE AN APPARATCHIK

In his new book Sidney Blumenthal presents a disconcertingly cynical yet naive account of the Clinton years

BY CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

.....

How is it that domestic politics in this country is at once so rancid and so banal, so embittered and yet so uninspiring? Why should it be that two parties with few if any essential differences are ready to speak of each other as if a cultural or even a civil war were only a few speeches away? Obviously, much of this fatuous rhetoric arises from the need to disagree more and more about less and less, to maintain the mills of fundraising in a churning condition, and to keep the dwindling groups of genuine loyalists and activists in a state of excited pseudo-commitment. But much of the dankness and dinginess is owed to the influence exerted by professional political operators, those who have a careerist interest in "the process" as it is—which is to say partisan in theory and bipartisan in practice.

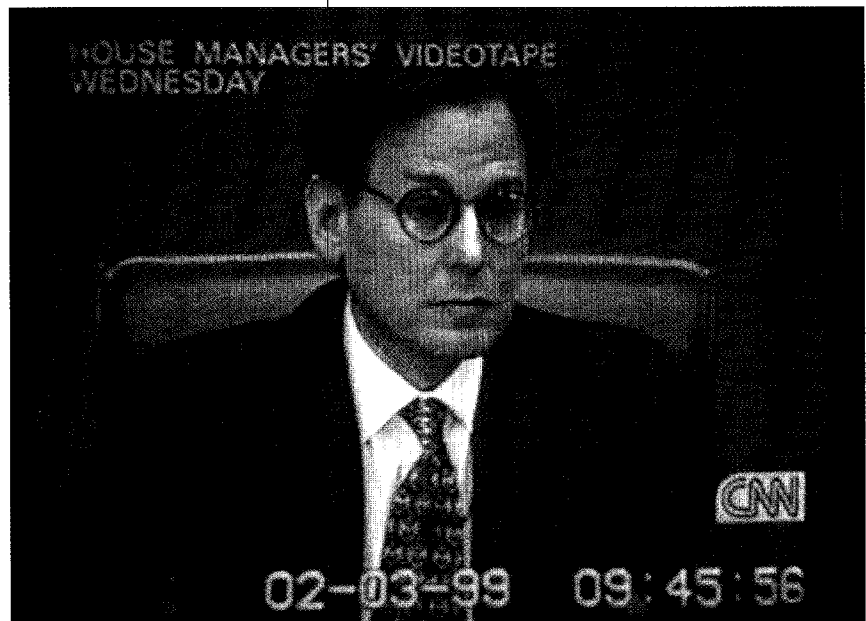
Those in the unelected election business who become celebrities are sometimes quite willing to work for either party. Dick Morris, to take a notorious example, toiled energetically for Jesse Helms before being hired by the Clintons. David Gergen's mysterious usefulness to a succession of Republican and Democratic Presidents will almost stand comparison with the mystical utility of the Reverend Billy Graham to Eisenhower and Nixon, Carter and Clinton. The self-satirizing summa of all this is the bizarre marriage of Mary Matalin and James Carville, who actually contrived to run opposing presidential campaigns in 1992 while still, at the end of the day, proving that the two parties were essentially in bed together.

The privatized and privateering class of spin doctors, advisers, consultants, fundraisers, and reputation mongers displays a weird combination of cynicism and naiveté. It knows better than anyone else what the candidates and parties are really like. But it is compelled, when disgust or alarm reaches a certain

pitch, to act as if only a member of the "other" faction could stoop so low. This falsity and cheapness has now reached a point where, palpable as it is even to half-indifferent readers and viewers, it may have become invisible to the participants themselves. Not long ago in this magazine David Brooks mapped a political sociology elaborating on the notion that the country was in theory divisible between heartland "red" districts and more coastal "blue" ones, the colors showing (rather counterintuitively, perhaps) a respective difference between Republican and Democratic areas. Soon afterward one of Bill Clinton's reliable yes-men,

THE CLINTON WARS

by Sidney Blumenthal
Farrar, Straus & Giroux



Paul Begala, issued a response, asserting that it was in "red" districts that gay men like Matthew Shepard were lynched, or black men like James Byrd were dragged behind pickup trucks until they died.

If this meant anything, it meant that the difference between a donkey and an elephant was the difference between democracy and fascism, or between pluralism and absolutism. But just wait for

the good people's party to be caught doing something shady or vile; at once you will be told that it's no worse than what the bad people's party would do or has done. Immediately, in other words, the apologist will admit that the game is up, and that he is judging his own team by a standard (of ghastliness in others) that he himself helped to set. "They all do it" means, in this circle, "We all do it." But the apologist won't concede this consciously or honestly. Faced with the task of explaining the Clinton pardons, including one to Marc Rich, Sidney Blumenthal, a former senior Clinton adviser and friend of Dick Morris's, immediately responds, in *The Clinton Wars*, that Richard Nixon pardoned Jimmy Hoffa; and as for the \$190,000 in gifts accumulated by the Clintons, it was "roughly the same amount as the preceding Bushes had accepted." Since he elsewhere accuses the Republican Party of being essentially lawless and segregationist, he might admit that he's setting himself a low standard. But he doesn't get the joke.

And of course by the time he makes the accusation he has joined the ranks of the unlucky political-consultant high-flyers—the ones who have hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal bills to pay off. This frequent misfortune often entails the writing of a long and turgid and self-justifying book, in return for a completely ridiculous publisher's advance.

As the portentous title implies, *The Clinton Wars* consists of a defense loftier

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than its proximate subject. It swings hec-
tically between major and minor themes
yet somehow remains consistent. Obvi-
ously, the business of the United States
cannot really have been consumed for
so long in an argument about the old
excuse that "blowjobs don't count." No
President could have been so selfish or
fanatical as to mobilize his administration
on that point. A deeper reading must and
will reveal that this was a serious crisis
of the Constitution, pitting the grandest
ideas of civil government against the
meanest ones. Blumenthal cites with
approval a statement drafted by many
American historians convened by Sean
Wilentz, which was inscribed with the
signatures of Arthur Schlesinger and
even C. Vann Woodward. This attempt to
call Clinton to account would, "if carried
forward ... leave the Presidency perma-
nently disfigured and diminished, at the
mercy as never before of the caprices of
any Congress," they announced.

The Presidency, historically the center
of leadership during our great nation-
al ordeals, will be crippled in meeting
the inevitable challenges of the future.

Truly has it been said that the future
lies before us, with the past behind. The
statement never exceeded platitude of
this sort, and since it was made it has
been replaced by proclamations from
Schlesinger and Wilentz to the effect that
the current President has been overbear-
ing, in a time of "great national ordeals,"
toward Congress. Both positions may
by all means be valid, but it will be
noticed, I hope, that they fluctuate in
intensity according to the relatively
ephemeral matter of partisan affiliation.

My own view of this has been con-
ditioned partly by my scrutiny of the
great scholars and historians, but also by
the more wormlike perspective of one
who notices that political crooks and
liars often get caught for the least of their
offenses. That Nixon should be snagged,
after so many high crimes and misde-
meanors, for a "third-rate burglary" ...
I suppose I viewed this as better—with
all its congressional tyranny over the
White House—than nothing at all. If I
hadn't had some relish for the ironic con-
trast between the sublime and the ridicu-
lous, I would never have become a friend
of Sidney Blumenthal's in the first place,

WHEN THE KING TOOK FLIGHT

TIMOTHY TACKETT

On a June night in 1791, King Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette fled Paris in disguise, hoping to escape the mounting turmoil of the French Revolution. They were arrested by a small group of citizens a few miles from the Belgian border and forced to return to Paris. Two years later they would both die at the guillotine. It is this extraordinary story, and the events leading up to and away from it, that Tackett recounts in gripping novelistic style.



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and would never have been pushed to the length that this friendship eventually required of me: a decision to testify that a President who was certifiably filthy in small things might deserve to be arraigned on larger matters also.

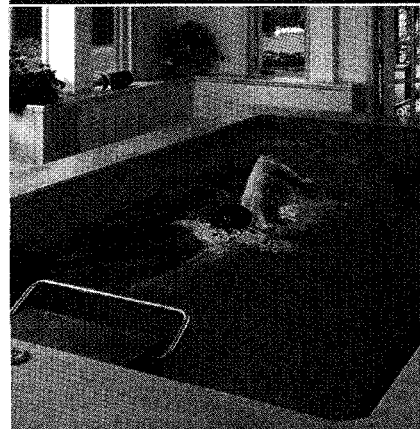
If in the foregoing I appear a bit coarsened by twenty-one years' residence in Washington, D.C., I want to state for the record that I was not always thus. I remember the arrival of Sidney Blumenthal in the city, in 1985, as a distinctly cheering event. I'd first met him and seen him perform at the Lehrman Institute, in New York, and later visited him in Brookline, Massachusetts, and it seemed to me that he was just what the nation's capital needed. He and his wife, Jackie, were charming and smart and generous, and unlike many if not most politicized types, they had a real feeling for history and for literature. Blumenthal was politicized, all right, and very committed, but he had written a book that tried to expose the underlying racket. It was called *The Permanent Campaign: Inside the World of Elite Political Operatives*.

I learned a lot from Blumenthal's exhaustive knowledge of past campaigns and presidencies, and I was impressed despite myself by his ability to put a radical shine on the most wretched Democratic nominees. In 1988, for example, he called me to report happily that the candidate Michael Dukakis, while governor of Massachusetts, had issued a posthumous pardon for the martyred Sacco and Vanzetti. (Actually it turned out to have been a 1977 proclamation casting doubt on the fairness of their trial.) After the Dukakis debacle I asked him, "So, what's next?" and he gloomily replied, "Gephardt," in a tone suggesting that his own permanent campaign had become something of a burden to him. I knew by then that he'd been accused of being "too close" to politicians he'd also been covering: first Dukakis as governor, and then, before Dukakis as nominee, Gary Hart as a candidate. I didn't think this mattered much, because it was only part of the affectation of integrity in Washington to pretend that reporters didn't deal in "access," and because Blumenthal made no bones about his allegiances.

There was another flaw, though. It's actually quite a common failing among Washington intellectuals. They wish to prove that they are not just ivory-tower or pointy-headed; that they can be tough and practical and even, when occasion may demand it, ruthless. (One might instance Arthur Schlesinger's Camelot prose, or the crackpot realism of the Robert McNamara set, or the moral rough stuff generated by the subacademic subordinates of Henry Kissinger and Oliver North.) And one could not avoid sometimes hearing Blumenthal, in his hard-boiled mode, speaking rather alarmingly of Chicago relatives who knew what was what and how to fix things, even people. I admit that I thought of this as a bit of a pose, because his general appeal depended so much on his almost foppish manner and tenue and also on his happy resemblance to the young Christopher Reeve. Every now and then, though, I would detect a semi-audible note, as of a dog whistle subliminally summoning a sleeping Doberman. Equally harmless, I then thought, was his fondness for conspiracy theories. As a younger man (his background included Students for a Democratic Society at Brandeis and the Boston alternative *Real Paper*), Blumenthal had spent some time with Carl Oglesby and the Assassination Information Bureau. Oglesby was also a very bright guy, and an inventive radical, but his take on the secret history of the country could most kindly be described as original. How shall I put it? I knew many radical and liberal writers with similar evolutions in their backgrounds, and Blumenthal—though having, unusually, a tendency to admire and emulate both the ward heeler and the radical victim—appeared to have both elements under control and to be able on occasion to be self-mocking about them.

But it's difficult for some people to understand, or to remember, how desperate the scene in 1992 must have looked to a professional Democratic insider approaching if not confronting middle age. The secret of "doing" elections, by subcontracting them to characters like Lee Atwater, appeared to have become solely the possession of the Republicans. And in the making of Presi-

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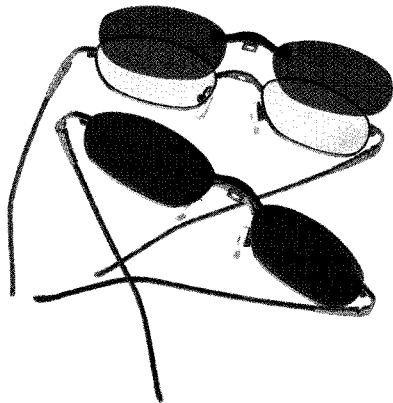
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dents the Democrats appeared to have
run out of human material. And then ...

Clinton brought in with him a stream
of cool, brisk air from outside. At six
feet, two inches, with a jutting jaw,
gray-green eyes, a ruddy complexion,
and loose long limbs, Clinton was the
most physically imposing person in
the room, as he almost always was.

This style, which I would describe
as "Theodore off-White," absolutely
pervades *The Clinton Wars*. Sometimes
it is unintentionally hilarious ("Clinton
never left a roomful of people until he
had spoken to and physically touched
as many as he could"), and sometimes
it is astonishingly grandiose.

Had the proposals Clinton made for
new legislation been enacted, the Unit-
ed States would now have universal
health insurance, affordable prescrip-
tion drugs for senior citizens, universal
day care, more schools, higher teacher
salaries and higher educational stan-
dards, more gun safety, greater voting
rights, new civil rights laws against dis-
crimination, and an even higher mini-
mum wage. Had his foreign policy
been fully enacted, the United States
would have affirmed the Kyoto treaty
to address the dangers of global
warming; more programs for educa-
tion, disease control, and economic de-
velopment for Africa; and more trade
with Latin America. Had his adminis-
tration had another year, he would
have reached a final agreement with
North Korea preventing it from devel-
oping nuclear weapons, and perhaps
even an altered outcome to the final-
status negotiations between Israel and
the Palestinians. Certainly he would
not have abandoned either of those
negotiations, as his successor did.

Thank heaven for that saving "per-
haps." Another term and there would
have been a cure for cancer, an extra
harvest, and a Five Year Plan for the
eradication of poverty and illiteracy,
fulfilled to stormy applause in just
four years. The world's terrorists and
tyrants, needless to add, would have
been quaking and abdicating, as one
remembers their so conspicuously do-
ing during the mere eight years of the
Clinton colossus that we actually were
lucky enough to be granted, and which
were probably all that we deserved.

Notice, above, that not only teachers'
pay would have risen but also "educa-

tional standards." For me this illustrates
yet again the way in which utopianism
tends to become the subconscious en-
abler of cynicism. (The teachers' unions
are one thing, but the *standards* ...) The
United States Senate voted 95 to 0 to
assert its opposition to the Kyoto
Treaty, so it is idle to say that it would
have been "affirmed" unless one sur-
renders entirely to wishful thinking. In
sad reality, Clinton on his visit to Africa
was compelled to apologize for doing
worse than nothing about Rwanda.
During his tenure health care as a topic
was first bungled and then dropped,
and as a practical matter was taken
over by HMOs. And the United States
was made to look silly and weak by the
behavior of North Korean, Arab, and
Israeli rejectionists. (It would have
been false for Blumenthal to say that
the Bush Administration has "aban-
doned" talks on either Palestine or
Korea no matter when he wrote it.)
Finally, this yearning talk of an extra
year in office is somehow revealing.
The Constitution mandates a two-term
limit, and an 1845 congressional statute
set a fixed date every four years on
which elections must be held. If the
elder Bush had had just one more year,
the economic recovery, with all its spec-
ulative energy, could well have come in
time to save him from that witless taunt
"It's the economy, stupid." But then,
if this republic—alone among major
democracies—did not commit itself to
a strictly predictable election cycle, the
professionals would not have such a
lock on everything from the Iowa caucus
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At any rate, in 1992 Clinton was no
more than a moderate governor of
Arkansas in a fairly mediocre year. But
he immediately struck some people as
the likeliest means of ending an unbroke-
n sentence of Republican rule. Was
this because of his adventurous attitude
toward "re-inventing government"? His
readiness to rethink Democratic Party
traditions? His fairly but not very hawk-
ish attitude toward foreign and defense
policies? No doubt, for some elements
in politics and journalism, all this was

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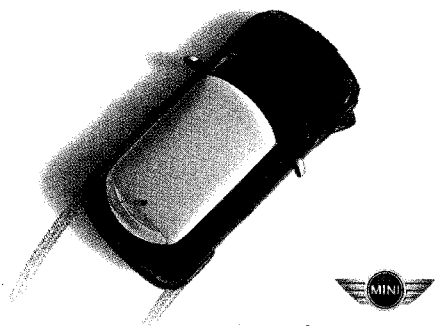
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in his favor. (Hence "New Democrat," "New Paradigm," and all the other neologisms of the day.) For those lamenting the craven reluctance of the center left to challenge post-Culf Bush, it was the sheer fact that Clinton was willing to run at all. He had a coterie of former Rhodes scholars who would support him unconditionally. And then there were those who liked him because he was willing to do anything at all to win.

I personally became powerfully nauseated by seeing Clinton up close in New Hampshire that year. His big, red-faced frame didn't seem so much "imposing" as simultaneously needy and greedy. He lied aggressively about Gennifer Flowers and, sitting next to his wife, let her do his marital propaganda for him. He fundraised as if there were no guidelines. When the polls seemed to sag, and he sought to burnish his tough-on-crime credentials, he flew back to Arkansas to oversee the execution of a brain-damaged black convict named Rickey Ray Rector. This episode isn't mentioned at all in Blumenthal's narrative, but it revolted a few people at the time, as it should have. By this stage Blumenthal was fully on board the candidate's train; and I'll never forget a Georgetown dinner, at which he was probably the most conservative person in attendance, where various liberals wondered aloud what the limits of "lesser evil" politics might be. One misgiving after another was mentioned, until Blumenthal impatiently quelled the bleats. "You don't understand," he said. *"It's our turn."*

There's no real trick to thinking like an apparatchik. You just keep two sets of ethical books. Thus, or in this case, only bad people get paid for their disclosures. Only Republicans ever use race in politics. And only reactionary thugs ever campaign as law-and-order exploiters of the death penalty. So Gennifer Flowers can be impugned, not for having a story to tell but for having a story to sell. Rickey Ray Rector can be given a lethal injection during a cliff-hanger primary because Clinton needs to show that he can't be "Willie Horton," as the saying then went. If Blumenthal can't mention, as he often does, that some of Clinton's critics made money on

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their efforts, then he can insist that the President was attacked by people who wanted to play the race card. Indeed, he asserts that it was "the racial dynamic" that led to Clinton's eventual acquittal at the impeachment trial. (To his credit, he does not stoop to insulting either black or white citizens by saying that Clinton was the first black President.) But, in discussing impeachment, he does take particular care to remind us that one of the President's chief antagonists was a staunch supporter of the death penalty. These claims and accusations all invite a *tu quoque* of which Blumenthal seems almost ethereally unaware. If money is a motive in politics or disclosure, it cannot be the motive of one faction only. If the race card can be played one way, it can be played another. (It's true that with Rickey Ray Rector, Vernon Jordan, and Betty Currie, Clinton became the first to play it both ways.) If someone else's support for executions can be exploited to shore up or condemn one position, it can be exploited to shore up or condemn another. But Blumenthal just doesn't allow the thought to occur. The author of this book, a huge amount of which consists of excerpts and transcripts, was rewarded at the rate of more than \$790 a page—so are we to regard this as mercenary?

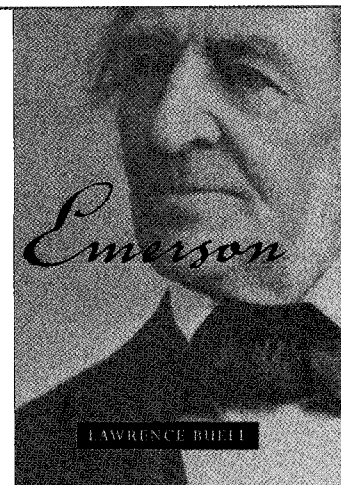
I think not. I think Blumenthal would have done it for nothing. I think it is only for strict party reasons that he fails to mention Roger Tamraz and James Riady and all Clinton's other thick-envelope direct donors, and concentrates instead on saying (at excruciating length) that Whitewater produced no smoking gun. This may be true, though it is not true that the Clintons ever acted as if they had nothing to hide or nothing to fear. And the tactic of long delay and eventual disclosure, as with the final, grudging, surly admission about Gennifer Flowers, served to get them past several awkward political cycles. Bizarrely, Blumenthal asserts at one point that "it was not the distraction of his impeachment that somehow prevented" the enactment of Clinton's fabulous program. But a decidedly different impression is given by the bulk, in both senses of the word, of his narrative. Thus we come inescapably to the question of sex.

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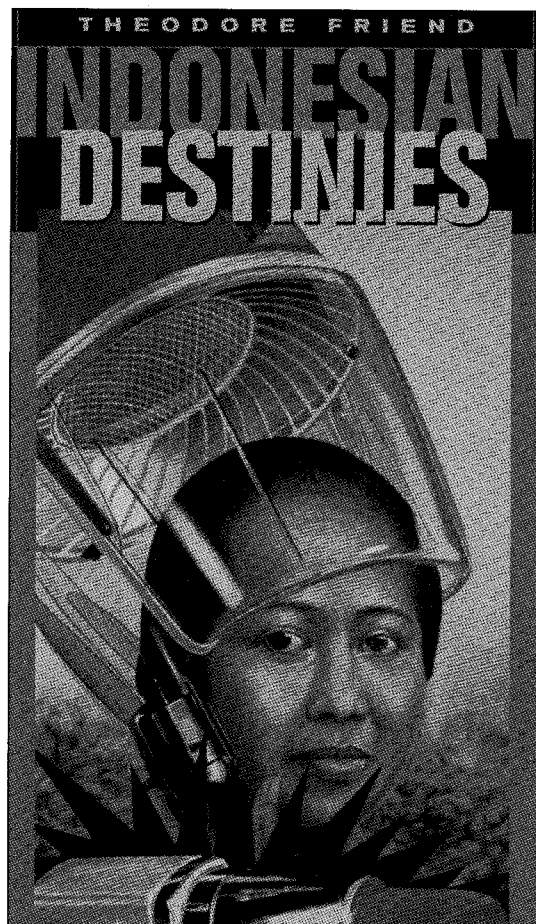
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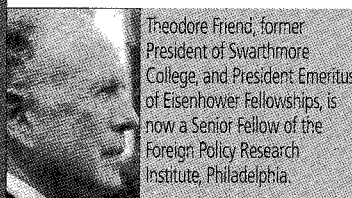
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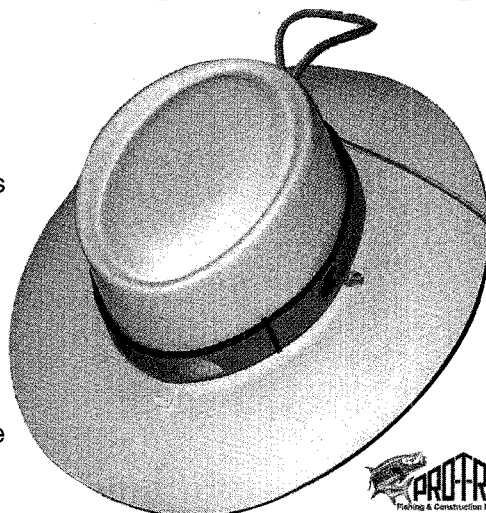
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I always thought that it was very clever of Clinton to make a mystery where none existed about when, and even where, he had touched Monica Lewinsky. Since his denial was made partly under oath, and involved a legalistic definition even of certain orifices and appendages, it necessitated a minute inquiry. And this allowed Clinton's defenders to paint his critics—his critics—as “obsessed with sex.” It comes down to this: Clinton asserts to the present day that he was innocent of perjury because although he did ejaculate in the intimate presence of Monica Lewinsky, she derived no pleasure or excitement from the moment. Thus, by a sort of psychopathic reasoning, it wasn't “sex” at all. I think this is one of the coldest and nastiest things ever said, and I believe that it should call our attention to a crucial distinction. The President did not lie about sex, as Arthur Schlesinger in the pre-impeachment hearings assured us a gentleman is expected to do. He lied about, and defamed, women. These included several women who had been quite fond of him, and who came to regret it. It wasn't enough for him to deny that he had lavished his attentions, whether wanted or (as in several thoroughly attested instances) unwanted. He had to say that the unfortunate but truthful females were liars, fantasists, job seekers, and even blackmailers. Their veracity versus his voracity. And this from someone who had taken personal credit for a clause in the law on sexual harassment that allows men, as well as women, to be questioned about their sexual pasts. To say that he tried to put himself above his own law would be stating the merest fact. Blumenthal at least shows that he understands the full purport of this law, by reprinting some raked-up allegations about the distant sexual past of Kathleen Willey, which even if true would have given her no reason to expect that she'd be confronted by a distended presidential penis while talking in the Oval Office during taxpayer-funded working hours.

Arthur Schlesinger is probably not the man I would resort to for advice on sex or, indeed, on how to be a gentleman. His voluminous New Frontier studies managed to omit what so many

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other contemporaries always knew: that John F. Kennedy was neurotically promiscuous and, as we later learned, not above sleeping with gun molls in the White House and recruiting their mobbed-up boyfriends for his Cuba policy. A private matter? Only if we agree to think of the White House—including the Lincoln bedroom and the Oval Office—as private property rather than public property: a claim that Clinton was also vain enough to make.

I don't know Arthur Schlesinger, and I can't say whether or not he is a sexual naïf. But I knew Sidney Blumenthal well enough to know that he understood the facts of life and could be very funny and acute about them, especially as they related to politics. He originated "Blumenthal's Law" to govern those cases in which mere speculation was involved. The law was a simple but useful one: "Everybody does something." I confess that I liked the echo of Willie Stark cynicism here. Whenever some poor sap in public life was found in a gruesome motel with a tired hooker and an expired credit card, Blumenthal would be first on my telephone with the latest and best joke about it. No harm in that, I say. I therefore regard it as quite impossible that he didn't know what many Clinton biographers have established: Clinton would have run for the nomination as early as 1988 if not for his fear of "bimbo eruptions" (please notice again that the women in his life are here degraded by definition, whereas the man is a passive victim). And if by any chance Blumenthal didn't know it then, he definitely knows it now, and has for years. In any event, I have to strain to believe the following statement:

Had Clinton had an affair with an intern? I just didn't know. I had no reason to doubt Hillary's sincerity in her version of events, and whatever my doubts, I wanted to believe her—to believe along with her.

This goes well past credulity and into the realm of the servile. When I first read the same claim in a different form, in Kenneth Starr's report, I was dumbfounded. This gullible person was not the Sidney Blumenthal I knew.

Or was it? At first he had declined to work directly for the Clinton White

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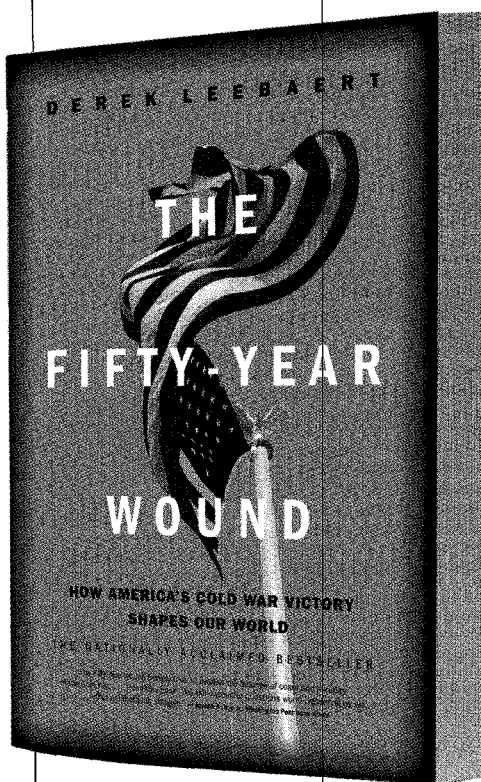
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House. He had been teased enough about being "in the tank." But when he again got the call, he decided that he had something to offer. And he was right in this. People chortled when he announced that he was working on "the Third Way" and on the upcoming millennium: it sounded Moonbeam-like. But I knew that Blumenthal had had an early understanding of the importance of Tony Blair, and that his best friend, Hillel Schwartz, had written a brilliant book about the significance of the year 2000. It turned out, though, that Clinton didn't want him for these nobler purposes. He wanted him as a damage controller with a certain sneaky side, and he wanted him as an inventive loyalist. He threw away the plum and kept the pit, of which this book is the ground-up residue.

It would be invidious of me to go any further without saying that Blumenthal's memoir contains some disobliging material about me, and about the late Michael Kelly, a former editor of this magazine. I am sure that had he been allowed time, Blumenthal would have excised or softened the mentions of Kelly on learning the awful news of his death, outside Baghdad airport, this past April. But he and Kelly never really got along anyway, whereas my case is different. I can't burden the reader with a detailed answer to all his claims about me and my undoubted moral shortcomings (for a fuller personal account dial up users.rcn.com/peterk.enteract/sob.html). In some instances I recognize the events he describes, but with a *Rashomon*-like reversal of verdict. In some fairly unimportant cases he has remembered things that did not take place, notably an evening "we" had with Gore Vidal in October of 1998 at which I was not present. But I have to contest his weirdly detailed account of a lunchtime meeting near the White House that on several other occasions in the book he claims either to remember only dimly or to remember not at all.

This micro-event was later to mutate into a brief macro-moment. In March of 1998, having not seen much of Blumenthal since he had joined the Clinton team (I had been teaching at the University of California at Berkeley), I was eager

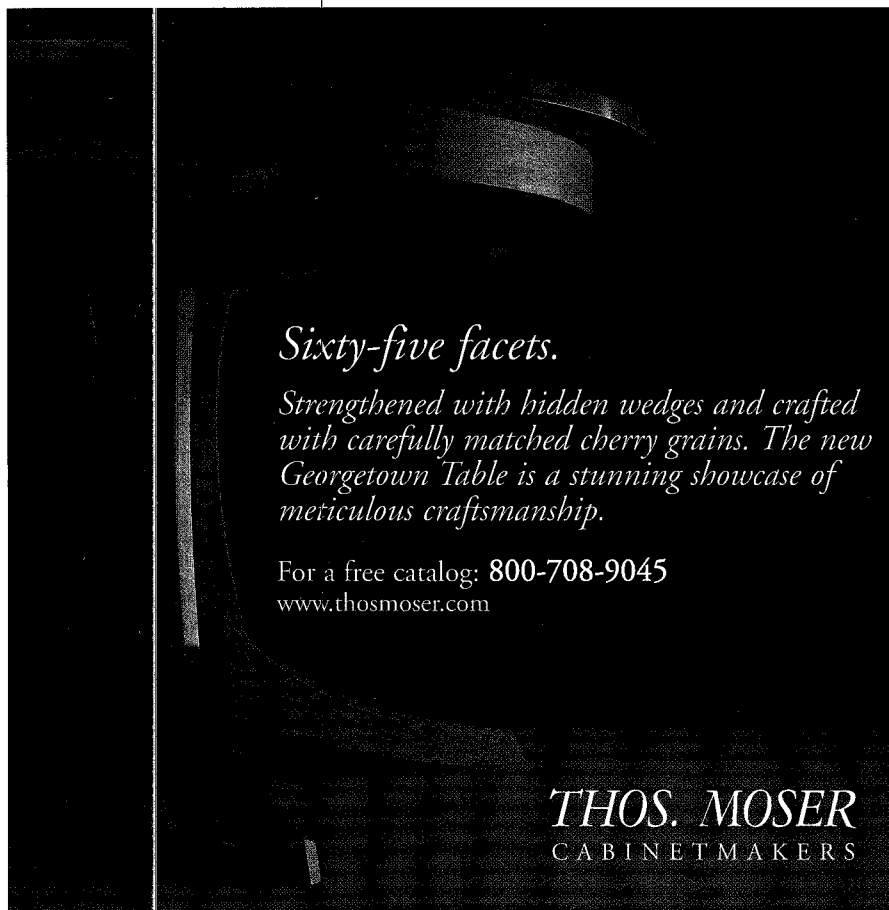
to catch up with him. With my wife, Carol, I took him for a reunion snack. I don't think I will or could ever forget the transformation. Where was my witty if sometimes cynical, clever if sometimes dogmatic, friend? In his place seemed to be someone who had gone to work for John Gotti. He talked coldly and intently of a lethal right-wing conspiracy that was slowly engulfing the capital. And he spoke, as if out of the side of a tough-guy mouth, about the women who were tools of the plot. Kathleen Willey, who had been interviewed on television the preceding weekend, was showing well in the polls, but that would soon be fixed. (The White House had already released her personal correspondence, prompting a federal judge later to find a violation of the Watergate-era Privacy Act. According to the Justice Department, the papers were released after a conversation between Hillary Clinton and Blumenthal.) As for Monica Lewinsky, he painted her as a predatory and unstable stalker. At the time this prompted no conclusion other than the sickening but unavoidable one that Sidney Blumenthal could be brought to believe that a President can be "stalked" in his own Oval Office (and in about three dozen incidents, according to the logs that record permission for Lewinsky to be shown in at odd moments). When asked by my wife how he could credit the stalker concept, he replied simply, "Because the President told me." There's much else about that lunch I need never disclose, but I remember that he twice hushed my questioning wife by saying, "Carol, I could go to jail for what I'm doing now." I didn't know then, and can't guess even now, what he meant by that.

Thus, when it all became a legal matter, and I began to see reports that Lewinsky was indeed a blackmailing strumpet (followed in due course by claims from the White House that it had no part in the circulation of this defamation), I already knew and was also able to confirm from other reporters where this was coming from. It may seem sordid or trivial now, but if a certain Cap dress had not been retained, Lewinsky could successfully have been denounced and humiliated as just a bit nutty and a bit slutty by a man who had once dangled the

promise of a permanent relationship before her dazzled eyes. And a callous perjurer would have flouted his own legislation. It seemed to me then, as it does now, that to permit this would be to acquiesce in an offense if not a crime. I had the ability to nail the lie, and when contacted by the House Judiciary Committee about the matter, I did so nail it. And I would do it again. I wish I'd had the chance to do it for Juanita Broadrick, whose story of rape has withstood fairly rigorous challenges. (In this book it is dismissed because David Brock didn't believe it.)

Blumenthal insinuates, by means of a loose chain of conjecture and hearsay, that I concerted my testimony in advance with certain House Republicans. This I did not do. With a given amount of labor I could easily prove as much. I also think I can claim that had I engaged in collusion, I would have produced a bigger bang than I actually did, or perhaps than I ought to have done. As it was, my intervention came too late, and by then the Republicans had lost their taste for what was an unpopular and abysmally managed impeachment. An extraordinary fact about *The Clinton Wars* is the way that it relies on *Sellout*, the indignant account by chief counsel David Schippers of how his prosecution was curtailed and sabotaged by the Senate Republican leadership. It turns out that the whole thing was something of a sham: Trent Lott and his associates were willing to wound and yet afraid to strike. If this is true, and if institutional bipartisanship did eventually triumph, then Blumenthal is both astonishingly right and extraordinarily wrong. If the Republicans never meant business anyway, what becomes of the charge that they were engaged in a remorseless death-or-glory witch-hunt?

One final observation: The President was on trial in the Senate, not Sidney Blumenthal. Yet Blumenthal had to appear at trial, and his boss and friend did not. The affidavit I gave to the House Judiciary Committee was directed at the defendant, not at his underlings. If Blumenthal really has been able to question the staff or members of the House Judiciary Committee to any extent, he will know that I stipulated that my testimony was given on one con-



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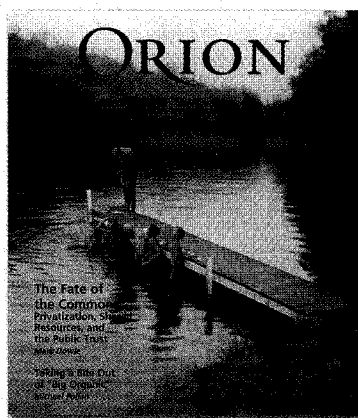
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dition: that it pertain only to this proceeding. The President, not his humble servant, was the source of the calumny that sought to obstruct justice. Were my words to be used against Blumenthal, I told them, I would repudiate them and place myself in contempt. I repeated this promise on *Meet the Press*, in an interview from which he quotes while affecting not to notice it. Yet Clinton later boasted through a spokesperson that he hadn't even watched the trial on television! Those who had trusted him were in the hot seat, in only the second impeachment in the country's history, and he hadn't bothered to tune in, or (since I think he was lying about this, too) didn't think it odd to brag of such indifference. I wonder how Blumenthal felt about friendship when he heard that.

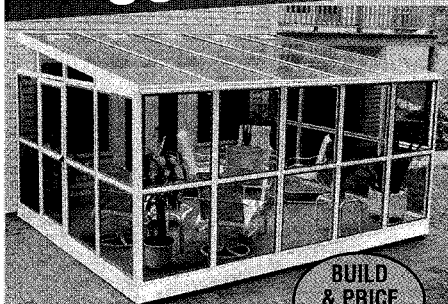
I knew or met quite a number of other Clinton associates, some of whom left quietly but in disgust (like George Stephanopoulos), some of whom were found to have exhausted their usefulness to the First Family (like Lani Guinier), and one of whom (Peter Edelman) publicly resigned in something like despair. When speaking later of their experiences, several of them called to mind ex-members of a cult, its inner dynamic the assuaging of various exorbitant appetites on the part of the leader. It all makes sense as long as you stay inside the encampment, and it all has a hallucinatory quality in retrospect. Some of the loyalists actually broke down in tears on the day that Clinton told them he'd been lying when he ordered them to defend him. (The President held precisely two full Cabinet meetings that year: one to recruit apologists for his Lewinsky cover story, and another to morosely inform them that they could now cease and desist.) But Blumenthal's persistence in abject devotion has something almost impressive about it. At one stage in the crisis Clinton called Blumenthal in and said that he felt like the prisoner in *Darkness at Noon*. I remember laughing out loud when I read that in Starr's report at the time, and thinking that the President was at least being artful enough to flatter his subordinate. “I knew the novel well,” Blumenthal gravely informs us here, before going on to suggest that

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a superior analogy would be the predicament of Winston Smith in *Nineteen Eighty-four*. Smith, we are then wrongly told, "commits the 'thoughtcrime' of having an affair with Julia, which is a crime against the state, which trains young people through compulsory membership in the Junior Anti-Sex League." That's not quite how I remember O'Brien or Room 101, but then, it's not quite how I remember the Clinton "wars," either. All the accused simply walked, and an Arkansas couple who came to Washington without a house to their name now have, after eight years on civil-service salaries, two or three mansions. Not to notice this is a form of doublethink: Blumenthal's flabbergasting literary comparison, an apparent attack on Party-minded fanaticism, is in fact a disguised and hysterical assertion of it.

This book overspills its ostensible subject and contains closing chapters about the grand Republican design to pre-arrange the outcome of the cliff-hanging Florida finale to the most recent presidential election. You may or may not believe that Al Gore was cheated of an election victory by the courts to which he had resorted; you may or may not have heard that the Clinton Administration was vigorously pursuing al Qaeda until the ball was dropped by the incoming Bush Administration. Blumenthal is highly indignant that some Republicans complained in public, when Clinton bombed Baghdad during his impeachment hearings, of a possible confusion between his own interest and the national one. As every liberal and Democrat understands, and as has been demonstrated so recently, such dreadful thoughts should not even be uttered in a time of—what was that again?—"great national ordeals." Again the note of wishful thinking is struck: if only it were not for the events of 9/11, it would be plain to all that George Bush is not a legitimate President, and that he owes his victory to the long Republican association with slavery and segregation.

This makes it all the more peculiar that Blumenthal should close with a lengthy citation from someone he describes as a "great admirer" of history's greatest Republican.

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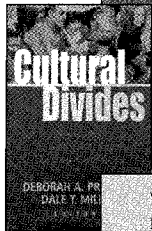
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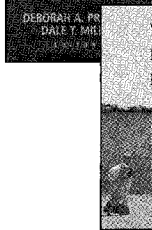
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*Why what have you thought of yourself?
Is it you then that thought yourself less?
Is it you that thought the President
greater than you? ...*

He continues:

*You may read in many languages, yet
read nothing about it,
You may read the President's message
and read nothing about it there ...*

And he concludes:

*The sum of all known reverence I add
up in you whoever you are,
The President is there in the White
House for you, it is not you who are
here for him,
The Secretaries act in their bureaus for
you, not you here for them,
The Congress convenes every Twelfth-
month for you,
Laws, courts, the forming of States, the
charters of cities, the going and coming
of commerce and mails, are all for you.*

No reference is given, but this is taken from Walt Whitman's *A Song for Occupations*, which is not in praise of Lincoln but is instead a hymn to honest toil and the uplifting of the land. Very many stanzas separate the three that Blumenthal has chosen to run together, and the poem as a whole does not aim to make us excessively respectful of those who are kind enough to rule over us. It might have been more apt to pick something from, say, *By Blue Ontario's Shore*.

*Have you possess'd yourself of the Fed-
eral Constitution?
Do you see who have left all feudal
processes and poems behind
them, and assumed the poems and
processes of Democracy?
Are you faithful to things? do you teach
what the land and sea,
the bodies of men, womanhood, amative-
ness, heroic angers, teach?
Can you hold your hand against all
seductions, follies, whirls,
fierce contentions? are you very strong?
are you really of the whole People?*

But then, if one sought any further illustration of the ways in which partisanship dulls the mind and the soul, it might be found in Sidney Blumenthal's highly incautious decision to try and make any peroration out of *Leaves of Grass*, briefly pressed onto Monica Lewinsky as a courtship accessory by the Nixon of the liberals. ■

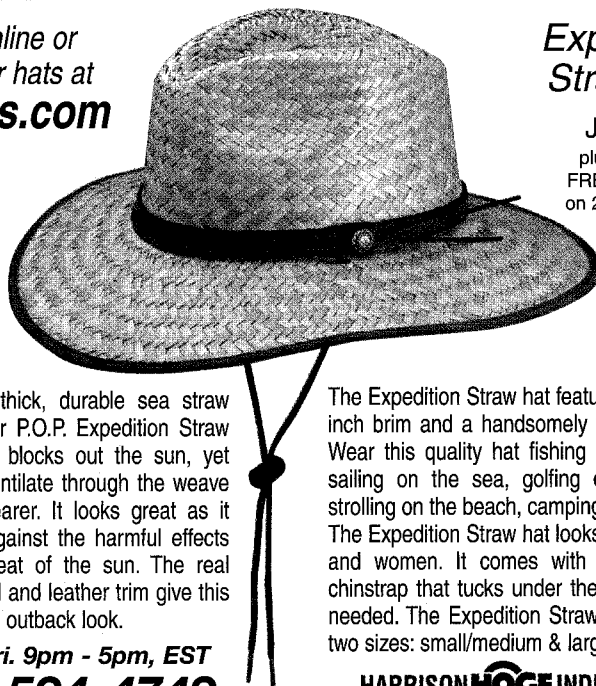
Christopher Hitchens is a columnist for Vanity Fair. His latest book, A Long Short War: The Postponed Liberation of Iraq, has just been published.



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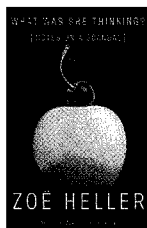
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SCANDALMONGER

.....

At first glance the narrator of *What Was She Thinking?* might easily pass for one of Anita Brookner's sexless and sardonic spinsters. Barbara Covett is a sixtyish schoolteacher with no friends, a beloved cat, and a pronounced distaste for contemporary British life. Her students are thugs, her colleagues are prattling nitwits. The local supermarket strikes her as a preserve of freakish loners. Even a display of fireworks on Guy Fawkes Day manages to rub this devoted anti-sensualist the wrong way: "I suspect that only the tiniest fraction of the crowd gathered on the top of Primrose Hill was genuinely invested in the spectacle, but we all stayed there for a full, frigid hour, dutifully manufacturing sharp intakes of breath and other symptoms of ingenuous wonderment."

What brings Barbara out of her shell is an entirely different sort of fireworks. First she is drawn to a new arrival, Sheba Hart, a pottery teacher with deliciously upper-class diction and a diaphanous wardrobe. Then she learns that Sheba, married with two children, is carrying on a high-octane sexual relationship with one of her fifteen-year-old pupils—a fact that promptly ignites a tabloid firestorm. The scandal has a tonic effect on the narrator, transforming her into (as one of the tabloids puts it) "the saucy schoolteacher's spin doctor." Indeed, the book we're reading turns out to be Barbara's own account of Sheba's liaison, including the dirty bits that she couldn't possibly have witnessed. Her mixed motives for concocting such a voyeuristic tall tale are ultimately what give Heller's novel its queasy, heart-breaking kick. "For most people," Barbara says, "honesty is such an unusual departure from their standard modus operandi—such an aberration in their workaday mendacity." Her own mendacity is more refined, wonderfully enter-



WHAT WAS SHE THINKING?
by Zoë Heller

Henry Holt

taining, and deeply (which is to say tragically) unconscious. —JAMES MARCUS

ROCK ON

.....

You know the jokes. Writing about music—in a line that is variously attributed to Laurie Anderson or Steve Martin, among others—is like "dancing about architecture." And writing about rock music, as Frank Zappa famously observed, involves "people who can't write interviewing people who can't talk for people who can't read." Well, we've come a long way. The vandals have not merely taken the handles; they've been invited inside the mansion and are helping themselves to brandy and cigars. Oxford University Press's Pivotal Moments in American History series, edited by the eminent historians David Hackett Fischer and James M. McPherson, brings us *All Shook Up* with no apologies and no reason for any.

Rock writing, no less than the music itself, has developed well beyond its easily mockable roots. But although we have any number of significant and scholarly biographies, including the two-volume work on Elvis Presley by Peter Guralnick, and first-rate collections of criticism by such luminaries as Greil Marcus, Simon Frith, and Robert Christgau, *All Shook Up*, by Glenn C. Altschuler, is one of the first to do rock-and-roll the significant service of locating it within the cultural and political maelstrom it helped to create. Altschuler does so with a good ear for the music and a deft hand, making this account a pleasure to read and ponder. He is not a flashy writer, but so much the better for his storytelling, which shows intelligence and narrative discipline. *All Shook Up* is not a history of rock-and-roll per se—it barely reaches the Beatles, only to skip all the way to Bruce Springsteen and end there. The story is really about



ALL SHOOK UP: HOW ROCK 'N' ROLL CHANGED AMERICA

by Glenn C. Altschuler
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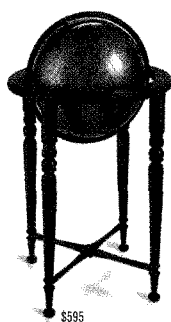
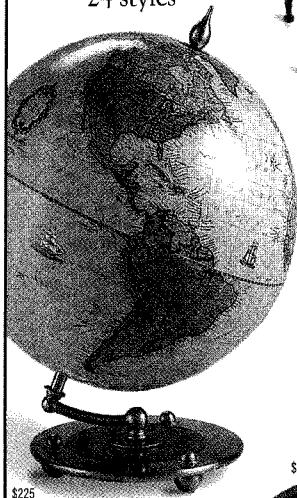
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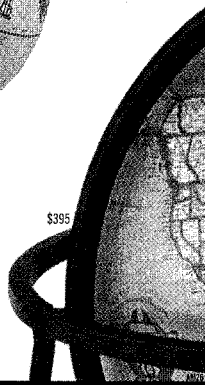
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the emergence and impact of rock-and-roll as a force in American society.

It isn't easy today to conjure up the sense of panic that 1950s America experienced at what was being done to its children. Overnight they seemed to want nothing more than to cavort with Negroes and simulate copulation on the dance floor. *Time* compared rock concerts to "Hitler's mass meetings." *The New York Times* provided expert opinion from a psychiatrist who branded the music "a cannibalistic and tribalistic" form of expression that might be likened to a "communicable disease." A *Times* reviewer found that the young Elvis had "injected movements of the tongue and indulged in wordless singing that were singularly distasteful." All shook up indeed. But of course the music never stopped. There was simply too much money to be made, and too many teenagers around claiming rock as a birthright.

Altschuler's capsule histories of rock's early pioneers won't seem particularly earth-shattering (unless you happen to be one of the few people on the planet who didn't know that Jerry Lee Lewis and Jimmy Lee Swaggart are cousins). But Altschuler surpasses the admittedly sparsely populated field in the nuanced way he places the music within the conflicts—racial, sexual, commercial, and political—that it variously helped to encourage, exacerbate, and (occasionally) ameliorate. Altschuler tells a story of liberation and fear, of inspiration and exploitation, of repeated attempts to homogenize a form of cultural expression that sprang from somewhere so authentic in Western youth culture that it proved bigger and more powerful than any combination of its myriad opponents. Indeed, it's hard to imagine how anyone ever managed to grow up without rock-and-roll, bless its bastardized soul. —ERIC ALTERMAN

JUST THE FACTS

.....

Penelope Lively is the bard of briskness, a novelist whose heroes think, act, even suffer, with no-nonsense, consummately British dispatch. When the

successful landscape historian Glyn Peters, "facts man, par excellence," discovers the infidelity of his deceased wife, Kath, he plunges into an obsessive quest for answers, interviewing her former friends and acquaintances in a belated attempt to understand her. Kath's lover turns out to be the husband of her older sister, Elaine, who responds to the posthumous revelation with alacrity by dumping her philandering spouse, no questions asked. If one can get past *The Photograph's* soap-operatic, faintly ludicrous premise, there's fun to be had watching Glyn and Elaine's tidy assumptions be undermined by Kath—"a mute subversive presence" they can't explain away. Like Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca, Kath has become "like some mythical figure, trawled up at will to fit other people's narratives." Lively continues, "Everyone has their way with her, everyone decides what she was, how things were."

Evidently, Lively likes her fictional worlds neat. Without exception, her self-absorbed academics, demanding garden designers, and unregenerate dreamers pull their schematic weight. The characters in *The Photograph* are either "striving ants" or fiddling grasshoppers, with the ants (predictably) winning in the end. The competing accounts of Kath are also carefully managed to support Lively's grand philosophical architecture; each is internally consistent and separated from the previous one by a few finely calibrated degrees.

In *The Photograph*, as in her Booker Prize-winning tour de force *Moon Tiger*, Lively skillfully orchestrates her material to serve an essentially psychedelic truth: no reality exists outside a spectrum of different perspectives, all a bit askew. If Lively's kaleidoscopic technique feels familiar, her style is original—at times manipulative but always bracingly intelligent. Rarely has a subject as elusive as life's irredeemable messiness been pursued with such unflagging rigor. —ELIZABETH JUDD



THE PHOTOGRAPH

by Penelope Lively
Viking

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SHE-DEVIL

.....

A Judith Krantz for the new millennium! Lauren Weisberger has produced a work of trash fiction of such unimpeachable quality—I enjoyed every page—that the golden girls of the form can hang up their spurs. *The Devil Wears Prada*, which is apparently based on its author's tenure as the *Vogue* editor in chief Anna Wintour's assistant, takes for its plot the old story handed down through the ages: young lovely from good family moves to Manhattan, takes job in glamorous industry, encounters dissipation and human venality of every stripe, and emerges either tarnished or triumphant (in this case—being chick lit—the latter).

Weisberger—a prodigy: Cornell University, class of 1999—understands that this kind of story must be composed of a certain kind of prose. To say that *The Devil Wears Prada* is cliché-ridden wouldn't be quite right; it's cliché-constructed. By novel's end the head of the heroine, Andrea Sachs, has swum, it has spun, it has felt like it would explode; her heart has flip-flopped, lurched, and stopped beating altogether (she bounced right back); her stomach has churned, her brain has been wracked, her body has been rooted to the floor, and—who can blame her?—she has breathed a sigh of relief.

The burden of Andrea's complaint (one senses very strongly that the opinions and attitudes of author and heroine are as one) is that when she graduated from college and got a job as personal assistant to the editor in chief of a fashion magazine, she ended up with the worst boss in the history of the whole wide world. Miranda Priestly is human evil incarnate: she forgets Andrea's name, forces her to make two trips to Starbucks in a single morning, never once compliments her on her clothes. On one level this is a straightforward revenge novel, but on a (slightly) deeper one it's really about



THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

by Lauren Weisberger
Doubleday

the ice-water shock of leaving college and getting a real job. Like many young people in this new and unpleasant situation, Andrea both aggrandizes her importance to her boss (she believes that Miranda's every slight is carefully orchestrated to demoralize her) and insists that she alone understands the shallowness, the emptiness, the hollow misery that is her employer's life. The whole thing explodes in a big confrontation at a Paris fashion show that is the embodiment of every first-jobber's favorite fantasy ("Fuck you, Miranda, Fuck you"). There are countless entertaining descriptions of clothes and office procedures and fits of pique; Weisberger writes with the passionate intensity of a ninth-grader whose pride has been wounded, and I forgave her much. For some reason the novel, which has no literary pretensions whatsoever and which I read because a friend recently impulse-purchased it for me at Costco, is being taken seriously. It was reviewed in *The New York Times* by a former editor in chief of *Harper's Bazaar* who was herself "mentored by Anna Wintour" during eight years at *Vogue* (was Wintour herself unavailable to write the review?), and who unloads the big guns on Weisberger, which she probably deserves. But nothing can hurt a book like this (my dental hygienist all but pried it from my hands when she saw the title); a career has begun.

—CAITLIN FLANAGAN

Recent books by Atlantic authors:

Glory in a Camel's Eye: Trekking Through the Moroccan Sahara, by Jeffrey Tayler. Houghton Mifflin. Tayler is an *Atlantic* correspondent. His article "The Next Threat to NATO" appeared in the February 2002 issue.

The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice, by Philip Jenkins. Oxford University Press. Jenkins's article "The Next Christianity" was a cover story in the October 2002 *Atlantic*.

Gentleman Revolutionary: Gouverneur Morris, the Rake Who Wrote the Constitution, by Richard Brookhiser. Free Press. Brookhiser's article "The Mind of George W. Bush" was a cover story in the April 2003 *Atlantic*.



BOOKS

THE POETRY OF HEARTBREAK

The new collection of Robert Lowell's poems will doubtless stand from now on as The Work

BY PETER DAVISON

.....

When Robert Lowell's *Lord Weary's Castle* appeared, in 1946, it was as welcome as a bumper crop. The sheer gorgeousness and encrusted bookishness of this poetry startled readers used to the plain talk of Robert Frost and William Carlos Williams. The book—the first of his to find a general publisher—won Lowell a Pulitzer Prize at twenty-nine. From there his fame accelerated, owing to his hoary New England heritage (his great-granduncle was, among other things, a founding editor of this magazine), the passionate intensity of his writing, and the streak of madness in his life. By the early 1950s Lowell and his contemporary Richard Wilbur were ranked by oddsmakers as the two young poets to watch. (We are still happily watching Wilbur at eighty-two.)

Twenty-five years after his death, selected Lowell poems have been gathered into a single volume by his friend and

executor, Frank Bidart, on whom Lowell relied toward the end of his life. Long awaited, richly documented, and, yes, definitive, this volume must have been daunting to assemble. Bidart and his co-editor, David Gewanter, have faced frankly the uneasy but intimate relations between Lowell's harrowing life and his poetry, both in their choices of what to print and in their commentary and documentation. *Collected Poems* will doubtless stand as *The Work*.

Lowell did not attract notice beyond his native

Beacon Hill until he reached adolescence, when his oddities became apparent. His boarding-school classmates nicknamed him Cal, perhaps after President Coolidge, but more likely—owing to his physical strength, his habit of command, and his unwashed charisma—after the mad Roman emperor Caligula or the zealot John Calvin. The nickname stuck. Within a few years young Cal had

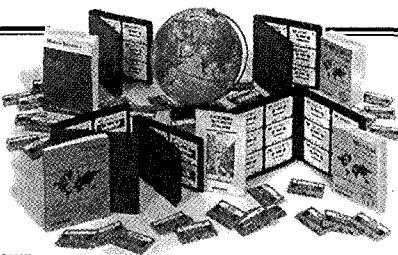
knocked his father down, attended and prematurely departed Harvard, moved on to Kenyon College (where his fellow students included Randall Jarrell, Peter Taylor, and Robie Macauley), graduated summa cum laude in classics, married the novelist Jean Stafford (but not before smashing her up in an auto accident while driving drunk), studied at Louisiana State University with Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, and converted to Roman Catholicism. In one of his early poems, "The Boston Nativity," he staged Christmas on Beacon Hill but sneered at his home turf: "Child, the Mayflower rots / In your poor bred-out stock ... / Here Concord's shot that rang / Becomes a boomerang."

A naval officer's son, Lowell twice attempted wartime service and was rejected for myopia; when, in 1943, soon after the fire-bombing of Hamburg, he was drafted, he wrote a manic "Declaration of Personal Responsibility" and declined to serve. As a matter of course, he addressed his conscientious objection to President Roosevelt, man to man. (He later confessed, "I thought that civilization was going to break down, and instead I did.") He was convicted and sentenced, for conscientious objection, to a year and a day in prison, of which he spent part at the Federal Correction

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Center in Danbury, Connecticut, and part mopping floors on parole.

In *Lord Weary's Castle*, Lowell rounded up, rewrote, and enriched poems written before 1944, and also included fresh work. The new lines were crammed with allusions to haughty Boston Brahmins as well as with the traffic of his reading and his personal experience. They resulted in a poetry that combined richness of diction and the dislocation of sense that had been pioneered by the high modernist poets. Both Lowell and Wilbur, however, had disregarded T. S. Eliot's notorious advice not to seek a model in the magniloquence of John Milton. Lowell's favorite poem was "Lycidas"; during his periodic mental breakdowns he would sometimes adopt Milton's poem as his own and rewrite it. On happier occasions he transmuted Milton's Latinate rhythms into an original, plainspoken New England rumble.

What are we in the hands of the great God?

It was in vain you set up thorn and briar

In battle array against the fire
And treason crackling in your blood;

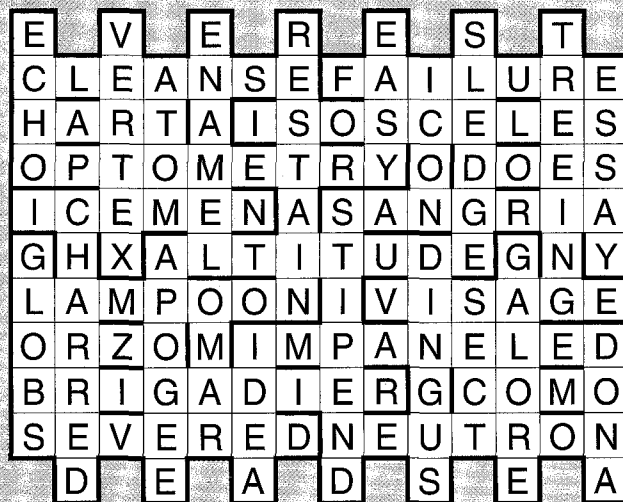
For the wild thorns grow tame

And will do nothing to oppose the flame ...

("Mr. Edwards and the Spider")

However, other poems in *Lord Weary's Castle* adopted a resonant, over-worked, and often obscure manner, which Seamus Heaney has called a "monotone of majesty," and they adverted to Lowell's private life and family as though these were public property. His emotional life when out of control colored history and personal fact alike. (As his friend Flannery O'Connor told a friend after Lowell, in 1949, called out the FBI to rid the artists' colony Yaddo of the pack of communists he thought were undermining the place, "I was too inexperienced to know he was mad, I just thought that was the way poets acted.") The past—all the dramatis personae of written history—would not leave him alone. Ambition, religious passion, poetic genius, and dementia throbbed together in verses that gave off a powerful music, enthralling to some readers but puzzling to others.

ANSWERS TO THE JUNE PUZZLER



"Standouts"

Across: 1. C(LEANS) + E 3. FA(IL)URE 6. HART (homophone) 7. ISOSCELES (anag.) 8. OP(en) + TOME + TRY 9. DOES (double def.) 10. IN + CEMEN(t) 11. SANG + RIA (air rev.) 13. LA + MPOON 15. VI(SAG)E 17. ORZO (hidden) 18. IMPA(NE)LED 19. BR(I + CAD)IER 20. CO(MO) 21. SE(V)E RED 22. NEU(T)RON Down: 2. A + TOM 4. I + CON 5. ESSAY (S A homophone) 12. C + LOBS 14. O + MAR 16. SEC(UT) Standouts: a. CHARRED (homophone) b. DING + US c. S(TIP)END d. REST + A + IN e. TREEING (anag.) f. DON + A g. E(NAME)L h. CA + LORE i. EASY (anag.) j. APOGE + E (go ape anag.) k. S + LEDGE l. ECHO (hidden) m. V(ER + T)EX n. I + DEA

Atlantic, you are fouled with
the blue sailors,
Sea-monsters, upward angel,
downward fish:
Unmarried and corroding, spare
of flesh
Mart once of supercilious, wing'd
clippers,
Atlantic, where your bell-trap guts
its spoil
You could cut the brackish winds
with a knife ...
(“The Quaker Graveyard
in Nantucket”)

After four more lines of threnody apostrophizing the Atlantic Ocean, the poem concludes with a booming Lowell fanfare.

The Lord survives the rainbow
of His will.

The vowels balance one another, and the sound is glorious, but how can an ocean cut winds with a knife? And whatever does that last line signify? Now, as I read the nearly 1,200 pages of *Collected Poems*, it becomes apparent that Lowell's poetry is burdened with hundreds of conclusions like this one—conclusions that, whatever else they do, don't conclude.

Lowell insisted that “a poem needs to include a man's contradictions.” He himself contained multitudes of contradictions, and he struggled to include them in nearly every poem. Toward the end of his life he observed, “What I write always comes out of the pressure of some inner concern, temptation or obsessive puzzle ... All my poems are written for catharsis; none can heal melancholia or arthritis.” Indeed, the poems healed no more than they concluded. In one poem he wrote, sadly, “Is getting well ever an art, / or art a way to get well?”

At forty Lowell found himself impatient with the “clotted” poetry (his own epithet) of *Lord Weary's Castle* and its successor, *The Mills of the Kavanagh's* (1951). He threw back an autobiographical curtain to make explicit the horrors of his emotional life and to admit, along with the pain, the radiance of his natural wit and humor. His religious faith faded, and he began to emulate the vigor of William Carlos Williams and to enable his poems to speak to his neighbors in the world, not only to his caste in Boston and the universities. *Life Studies*, which he published in 1959, after much

agony, ventured to speak openly about his madness.

One dark night,
my Tudor Ford climbed the
hill's skull;
I watched for love-cars. Lights
turned down,
they lay together, hull to hull,
where the graveyard shelves on
the town ...
My mind's not right.
(“Skunk Hour”)

Lowell wrote about his imprisonment, his marriage, his relatives, himself. His most publicly accessible and poetically integrated poem, “For the Union Dead” (1960), was stirred by memories of his childhood, yet it handled without pomposity or evasion one of the largest of American themes, the heritage of slavery, dwelling on the black Massachusetts 54th Infantry Regiment, led in the Civil War by Robert Gould Shaw (a distant kinsman of Lowell's). Vying with James Russell Lowell, who put the same subject to verse a century earlier, Robert Lowell wrote,

Two months after marching through
Boston,
half the regiment was dead ...
Their monument sticks like
a fishbone
in the city's throat.

It is characteristic of his apocalyptic outlook that, in the poem's inconclusive conclusion, he looked forward, with nearly sensual European relish, only to decadence, corruption, and peril.

The Aquarium is gone. Everywhere,
giant finned cars nose forward
like fish;
a savage servility
slides by on grease.

Even these famous lines escape finality. Lowell's poems seldom find stability, whether or not they are seeking it; nearly every one of a thousand poems ends by making us surer of instability, personal and social. “Cured, I am frizzled, stale and small” (“Home After Three Months Away”). “The disturbed eyes rise, / furtive, foiled, dissatisfied / from meditation on the true / and insignificant” (“Hawthorne”). “I am tired. Everyone's tired of my turmoil” (“Eye and Tooth”).

Lowell's psychic fragility excited those who somehow fortify themselves by tracking the spoor of celebrities'

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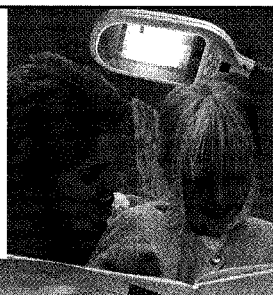
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private lives: "The news of his periodic breakdowns spread with amazing speed, penetrating without difficulty to even the most remote recesses of the world," the poet Anthony Hecht once wrote. Lowell participated in anti-Vietnam protests (marching on the Pentagon with Norman Mailer, campaigning with Eugene McCarthy). At the height of this middle period he touched the national conscience with passages like this one:

Only man thinning out his kind
sounds through the Sabbath noon,
the blind
swipe of the pruner and his knife
busy about the tree of life ...
("Waking Early Sunday Morning")

His public activities heaped fuel on the fire, even though he spent most of his time laboring inconspicuously on his writing, producing an immense, sprawling body of work: poems, plays, translations, and essays. For years he also commuted from New York to Boston to teach at Harvard, the university he had declined to graduate from.

After *Near the Ocean* (1967), Robert Lowell at fifty changed his voice, and his life, another time. He left his devoted second wife, Elizabeth Hardwick, and decamped for a third marriage, in England, to Caroline Blackwood. The move was appropriate: Lowell had always looked eastward across the Atlantic, to our European heritage and its history, at a time when many American poets thought to nourish themselves on the literatures of the Orient. He lived in England for much of the rest of his life, and today he may be more read there than in his native country.

Lowell's work accumulated, piling up in more than a thousand unrhymed sonnets known as the notebook poems. Was the stagnation evident in these poems provoked by his bipolar illness, by the lithium prescribed to control it, by his drinking, or by some other cause? Two books of these short poems were published under the title *Notebook* in 1969 and 1970. Three additional sequences, containing many poems revised and republished, emerged. *History* (366 poems) dealt principally with Lowell's reading and thinking and literary relations. *For Lizzie and Harriet* (sixty-six poems) detailed in melancholy fashion

the dismantling of his marriage to Hardwick. *Dolphin* (104 poems) chronicled the advent of his new love and his *Drang nach Osten*. The three volumes came out simultaneously in 1973, causing a rueful reappraisal even by Lowell's friends, some of whom could not forgive him for incorporating in his poems, nearly verbatim, parts of personal letters from Hardwick and their daughter. The English critic Michael Schmidt has written moralistically of the "confessional" qualities that make some readers uneasy with these poems: "The focus on *self*, the confidence that self is of sufficient interest to readers that its unraveling is a sufficient subject, and the—call it—solipsism which appropriates the literal language of others' suffering to lend veracity to his own account: this is a radical approach to subject-matter, a setting of poetry not within but above life."

But Lowell, embarking on fatherhood once more in England, and his mind somewhat clarified by his new life, arrived at yet another renewal of style. He wrote scalding, blistering poems, as he had done on each rising tide in the past, though some of the poems now were slightly Oriental in tone. Their conclusions were still weak, but their fragments had more edge than ever.

The struck oak that lost
a limb that weighed a ton
still shakes green leaves
and takes the daylight,
as if alive.

("We Took Our Paradise")

The humpback brick sidewalks
of Harvard
kick me briskly,
as if allowed the license of age;
persons who could hardly walk
or swallow,
when I was a student,
angrily grate like old squirrels
with bandages of white hair about
their ears.

("To Mother")

The night dark before its hour—
heavily, steadily,
the rain lashes and sprinkles
to complete its task—

("Seesaw")

Lowell's health gradually declined (by the end of his life he had been treated in dozens of psychiatric hospitals) and his third marriage gradually crum-

bled, but his dedication to writing and teaching poetry never flagged. He died in 1977 in a New York taxicab, on his way from Kennedy Airport to his second wife's apartment, carrying a portrait of his third wife painted by her first husband.

Poems do not, of course, write themselves, and Lowell's poems and translations always underwent a heroic but particularly bewildering degree of concentrated literary attention, scribbled in dozens of versions, displayed to friends and colleagues, rewritten, kitzed over, altered, recast, published, revised, rewritten, and published again. The sheer bulk of Lowell's work—he produced a total of nineteen volumes, including plays and prose—makes one especially grateful for the appearance of a discriminatingly selected volume. *Collected Poems* includes not only 838 pages of the corpus, a glossary, notes, a chronology, and appendices with notes and insights of their own, but also variants on a number of poems and a few fragments of Lowell's excellent prose. This apparatus condenses twenty-five years of biography, criticism, and gossip. In certain respects it hints at the conclusions that Lowell's poems themselves never quite attained. By its tender editorial attention to Lowell's contradictions it may present the best case for his poetry.

Blair Clark, a lifelong friend of Lowell's, once wrote,

I remember ... a dozen years before he died, bringing him back to my house in New York in one of his crazed escapes from home. Watching him breathe in heavy gasps, asleep in the taxi, the tranquilizing drugs fighting the mania, I thought that there were then two dynamos within him, spinning in opposite directions and tearing him apart, and that these forces would kill him at last. No one, strong as he was, could stand that for long.

But the most desperate insight, as might be expected, comes from Lowell himself. The critic Helen Vendler has described how one day, discussing the reviews of his late work, Lowell lamented, "Why don't they ever say what I'd like them to say?"

"What's that?" Vendler asked.

"That I'm heartbreaking," he said. ▀

Peter Davison is the poetry editor of The Atlantic and the author of Breathing Room (2000) and The Fading Smile: Poets in Boston 1955–1960 (1994), among other books.

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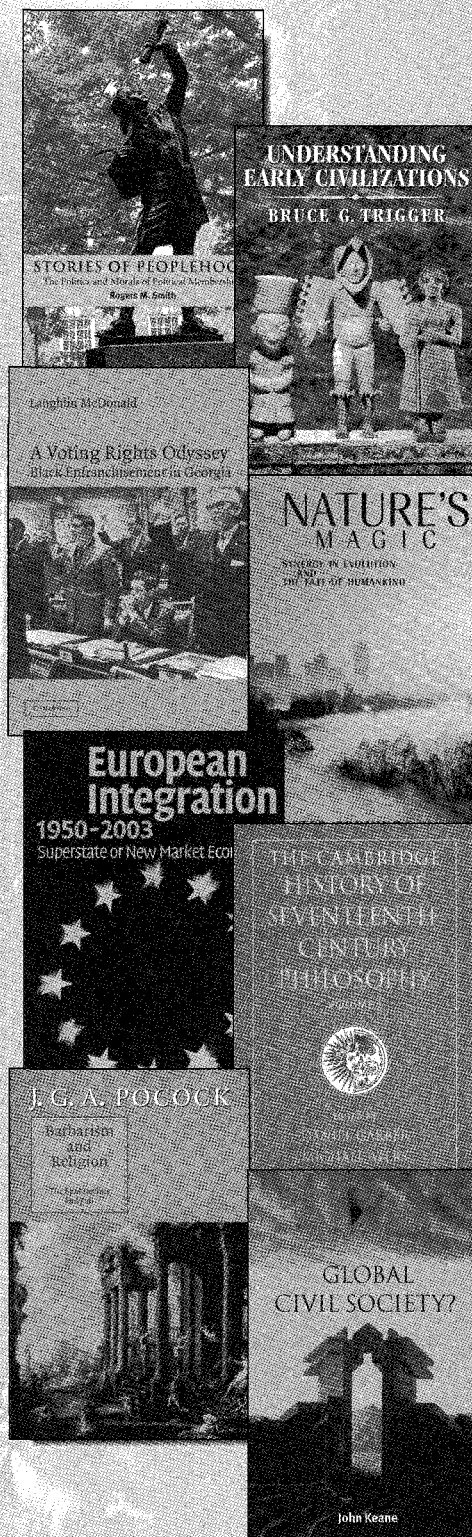
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BY CULLEN MURPHY

.....

A number of years ago Mort Walker, the cartoonist, gave me a pencil sketch of one of his *Beetle Bailey* comic strips. It shows the character Plato, the strip's intellectual, talking to Zero, the strip's dolt. They are putting some of Plato's books on a shelf, and Zero asks if Plato has read them all. Yes, mostly, Plato says. What's in them?, Zero wonders. Plato replies, "All the knowledge of the past on which we can base our actions in the future." And Zero asks, "What if some of the pages get stuck together?"

It's a good question, and a chilling one for a person like me, who believes deeply in the power of handbooks—who has faith, in other words, that any subject can be distilled into compact and accessible form. Lose a few pages from the manual *Crime Scene Investigation* and you may never know how to make a plaster cast of a water-filled footprint, or how to read erased writing by using ultraviolet light. Lose a few pages of *The French Foreign Legion: A Guidebook to Joining*, and you may learn too late that the words you'll most often be hearing in the Foreign Legion include "*Ferme ta gueule*" ("Shut your face") and "*Démerdez-vous*" ("Get yourselves out of the shit").

It's a commonplace to observe that as the world becomes more complex, it also becomes harder to comprehend. But I'm not sure this is actually true. The "why" questions (Why are we alive? Why do bad things happen to good people?) haven't really changed since hominids became sentient, whereas more and more of the "how" questions

have long since been addressed. Nearly 10,000 books in print in English begin with the words "How to": *How to Stay Alive in the Woods*. *How to Triumph Over Temptation*. *How to Marry Rich*. *How to Study the Bible*. *How to Talk to Your Cat*. But there are even more. A book called

oners™.") Last spring, as war approached in the Persian Gulf, bookstores in Kuwait reported brisk sales of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Iraq*. People who want to live "off the grid," disconnected from the conventional social infrastructure, have a wide variety of advisory options, from *How to Steal Food From the Supermarket* to *The Art & Science of Dumpster Diving*. Pessimists (or maybe just pragmatists) can consult several volumes of *The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook*, and be prepared in the event they need to fend off a shark



The Los Alamos Primer explains how to build an atomic bomb. A new one called *The Importance of Being Lazy* provides instruction in doing nothing. As new situations arise, new handbooks arise to meet them. The corporate malfeasance of recent years has left scores of executives facing criminal charges and the prospect of time behind bars. They can now avail themselves of Andy Borowitz's *Who Moved My Soap?: The CEO's Guide to Surviving in Prison*. (One chapter is titled "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Pris-

("hit the shark's eyes or gills, which are the areas most sensitive to pain") or perform an emergency tracheotomy ("if neither a straw nor a pen is available, use stiff paper or cardboard rolled into a tube").

I've been giving particular thought to handbooks in recent weeks because a friend called my attention to one of the finest exemplars of the genre—the U.S. Army *Ranger Handbook*, published by the Ranger Training Brigade, at Fort Benning, Georgia (and available through Amazon). The handbook pulls

no punches when it comes to stating the ambitious aims of the Ranger school: "Perhaps its greatest contribution is to create a climate of relatively high stress and deprivation." The *Ranger Handbook* is the *Boy Scout Handbook* on steroids; to the familiar lore on map-reading and fire-starting add such how-tos as "Knock Out a Bunker," "Breach a Mined Wire Obstacle," and "React to Air Attack." The chapter titled "Evasion/Survival" is a masterpiece of utilitarian opportunism: "Blood, which contains salts and nutrients, is a good base for soups." "The marrow in bones is a rich food source. Crack the bones and scrape out the marrow, and use bones to make weapons." The insights of yesteryear retain their relevance; fittingly, the *Ranger Handbook* ends with the full set of "Standing Orders" issued by Major Robert Rogers to Rogers' Rangers in 1759, during the French and Indian War. They include:

No. 1—Don't forget nothing.

No. 2—Have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, sixty rounds powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute's warning.

No. 3—When you're on the march, act the way you would if you was sneaking up on a deer. See the enemy first.

No. 11—Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.

Many of the world's great literary forms are relatively recent. The English sonnet emerged in the sixteenth century, the epistolary novel in the eighteenth, the solipsistic memoir in the twentieth. But you can find recognizable versions of the handbook back at the dawn of civilization. Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is more than 2,000 years old. Handbooks for horse trainers survive from the time of the Hittites. The Egyptians have left us some rather odd first-aid manuals. The *Kama Sutra* goes back to the fourth century A.D., and sex handbooks have been almost as plentiful as cookbooks ever since. By now the various genres of handbook share a certain basic sensibility, a certain plucky straightforwardness. An interesting experiment would be to mix and match the subjects and authors:

imagine if the writer of the owner's manual for a VCR were asked to reconceive *The Joy of Sex*, or if Dr. Phil were asked to explain how to maintain a mountain bike.

Thematically, some very modern handbooks have an aroma of great antiquity about them, harking back to the famously fierce days of the Hittites and the Babylonians. In the late 1990s reporters for the Baltimore *Sun* obtained and published portions of the CIA's *Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual*—a handbook for torturers. States that mete out the death penalty have drawn up protocols detailing exactly how executions should be performed. (From Utah's firing-squad protocol: "The offender is dressed in a dark blue outfit with a white cloth circle attached by Velcro to the area over the offender's heart.") The protocols may go so far as to mandate who is required to witness the execution, when they are to arrive, and where they are to sit. Whether they stipulate a specific menu for those in attendance, I can't say. "What was surprising to me was the cold cuts and the drinks," one witness to an Arizona execution told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Providing a buffet for the witnesses at an execution epitomizes the friendly American can-do spirit that animates the culture of handbooks. And it is, by and large, an American culture. Operating manuals and practical handbooks can be found everywhere, of course, but nowhere with as much abundance and diversity as here, where all challenges are tackled with a presumption that mastery is possible. Problems are broken down into components and then sorted, analyzed, and solved. At its most reductionist this process ultimately yields rules of thumb or universal "laws"—the literature is full of them. Pudder's Law: "Anything that begins well will end badly." Hanlon's Razor: "Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity." Sturgeon's Law: "Ninety percent of everything is crap." Allen's Axiom: "When all else fails, read the instructions." These may not exactly be what the Founders had in mind when they looked forward to "a government of

laws, and not of men," but Benjamin Franklin, the author of *Poor Richard's Almanack*, one of the great handbooks of practical wisdom, would certainly have understood.

In America the handbook approach even extends to political obligation. I don't know whether the Hittites or the Babylonians ever composed citizenship manuals, but the U.S. government makes available to immigrants seeking citizenship a handbook on American history and politics that is fuller and sharper than most high school textbooks. It comes with a glossary that includes not only terms you'd expect ("commander in chief," "freedom of religion") but also such pertinent concepts as "trying times," "assassinate," and "overconfident." The answers to the sample test questions accompanying the text are more nuanced than one might expect. To the question "What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?" comes the answer "Freed many slaves." The "many" is a surprising but accurate touch: the Proclamation freed only slaves in states that had taken up arms against the federal government. Whoever composed the test was an unabashed realist. The proposed answers to "Name one benefit of being a citizen of the United States" say nothing about breathing the sweet air of liberty, but one of the correct responses is this: "Petition for close relatives to come to the U.S. to live." Finally, one has to admire the way the "sample sentences for written English testing" subtly reinforce a Calvinist ethic: "I go to work every day." "You work very hard at your job." "You drink too much coffee."

As they begin to shape a new constitution and establish democratic institutions, American advisers in Iraq would do well to consult this handbook for prospective U.S. citizens—it may provide some useful ideas. The situation, of course, is likely to be volatile and unpredictable, and for that reason I'd also suggest that they keep another handbook close by—the one with Colonel Rogers's standing orders at the end. They should pay particular attention to No. 2. ▀

Cullen Murphy is *The Atlantic's* managing editor.

THE COLFAX RIOT

*Stumbling on a forgotten Reconstruction tragedy,
in a forgotten corner of Louisiana*

BY RICHARD RUBIN

.....

It is highly unlikely that you might just stumble upon Colfax, Louisiana; it's not on an interstate, and the only two things in the immediate vicinity that might qualify as conventional tourist attractions—a pair of Union warships that were sunk nearby during the Civil War—are, in fact, buried deep beneath the soil. But if, by some chance, you should find yourself in Colfax—as I did a few years ago—and take the time to look around a bit, you will discover that it is a place with a story you're unlikely to hear anywhere else. To be honest, you're not terribly likely to hear it in Colfax, either, unless you know whom to ask, and what.

Colfax sits on the Red River, about 220 miles northwest of New Orleans, in a largely Baptist part of the state that, according to my Official Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Highway Map, is known as "The Crossroads," though what those roads are and where they lead is left unspecified. It is anything but a stereotypical small southern town: no stately old courthouse, no picturesque courthouse square, no sprawling whitewashed Victorian mansions with expansive front lawns and cavernous front porches, no quaint little general store with an ancient Coke cooler and a checkerboard out front. That kind of southern town is dominated by shades of white and green; Colfax is gray and brown.

Colfax, population 1,659, is the seat of Grant Parish; both were created in 1869, the latter being carved out of Rapides and Winn Parishes and named by northern Republicans (sometimes called "carpetbaggers") and local Republicans (sometimes called "scalawags"). The

parish is named for the Civil War general and our eighteenth President, its seat for his Vice President, Schuyler Colfax.

Logging was long the main industry here, but nowadays 34 percent of the parish is untouchable federal forest preserve, and most of the rest has been cleared. Consequently, there isn't much work to be had in Grant Parish. Ninety percent of its work force commutes to



jobs elsewhere (most in Alexandria or Pineville, twin cities in neighboring Rapides Parish, about half an hour away). The combined population of Colfax and Grant Parish's other towns—Dry Prong, Georgetown, Montgomery, and Pollock—is about 3,500; the rest of Grant's residents, some 15,000 people, live, as the locals say, "in the woods." Colfax itself is mostly one street—Main

Street—with a railroad crossing, a small supermarket, a gas station, an alcohol-and-drug-abuse clinic, a modern library shaped like a cog, and a modern courthouse shaped like a concrete box. As I pulled into the courthouse's parking lot for the first time, I noticed two young black men hosing down a van. Later I learned that the two were in fact prisoners—trusties, incarcerated in the jail behind the courthouse—who would wash any car, inside and out, for five dollars. For fifteen they'd add a coat of wax.

I spent that afternoon and much of the evening doing genealogical research (don't ask), first in the courthouse and later in the library; by the time I decided to quit for the day, the sun had long since set. I stumbled out of the library, tired and half dazed from hours spent poring over marriage licenses and census records, and lurched across the courthouse parking lot toward my car; the car-washing trusties had returned to their cells. Colfax was dark and quiet—deserted, really. For a moment, as I gazed across the courthouse's front lawn, I thought I spotted a human figure in the far corner, standing under a magnolia tree; but looking closer, I realized that it was actually a historic marker. I walked over to read it.

COLFAX RIOT

On this site occurred the Colfax Riot in which three white men and 150 negroes were slain. This event on April 13, 1873 marked the end of carpetbag misrule in the South.

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Some time later I was sitting at a table in a genealogy library in nearby Alexandria when I found myself eavesdropping on a conversation between what appeared to be two friends: a stocky, balding man in his forties, wearing an ID badge from a local power company, and a skinny, somewhat older man sporting a Caterpillar cap and a white brush moustache. "I found another wife in Ouachita, ten years later," the former said animatedly,

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Jack Hannah in *You Will Not Taste Death: Jesus and Epicureanism* recognizes the notes as chronologically ordered and correlative with the skeletal history used in the *Gospel of Mark*. Hannah provides all the text of *Thomas* and all Marcan context, and upon this develops a narrative about Jesus that is tenably historical.

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Hannah's book is 321 pgs., pbk., \$12 postpaid.

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pointing to some notes on a legal pad. "This one's even younger. He sure got around." The older man smiled back, nodding his head. I imagined they were regulars at the library, and I soon became enmeshed in a conversation with them as they sought to educate me about Louisiana history and the pitfalls of genealogy. We talked for the better part of an hour; then, as I was getting up to leave, I remembered the historic marker outside the Grant Parish courthouse. Now, I'd studied the Civil War and Reconstruction quite extensively, and I'd never even heard of the Colfax Riot. Neither had the half dozen history professors and the dozen Louisianans from New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Alexandria I'd asked about it since I'd first read that marker. I had a feeling,

ironclad ship ever to sail on the Red River. They took it off the boat at Montgomery and wheeled it down, and they had to get a Union soldier to show 'em how to use it. And on Easter Sunday they set it up there and just fired the hell out of that courthouse. Killed a bunch of blacks, drove 'em out. Ben Littlepage up there still has that cannon, sittin' on his front lawn."

When I returned to the genealogy library the next day, the man with the white moustache handed me an eyewitness account of the riot, written fifty-four years after the event by one John I. McCain, of Montgomery, Louisiana, a white man who asserted with perfect confidence that the Colfax Riot was "one of the most important events in the history of the nation." As he recalled,

Whites I met in Colfax told a story remarkably similar to those old accounts of the riot, adding the modern detail about how the cannon involved could still be found in town, sitting on Ben Littlepage's lawn.

though, that these two men might be able to tell me a little more about it.

I was right.

"You know," said the thin man with the white moustache, "after the Civil War these carpetbaggers came down from up north, and they played games back and forth with the local government, switching back and forth. So during one of these games a mob of blacks takes over the courthouse up in Colfax. They just take it, and decide they're going to run Grant Parish. You heard the expression 'gettin' uppity'? Well, that's what these people did—they got uppity, and decided they would run things, and of course they couldn't."

"After the war," his friend said, "the government took the blacks and said 'Here's your freedom,' but they didn't give 'em jobs and they didn't have the money to support them or feed them."

"And the whites," the other man continued, "started putting together militias to go up there and take the courthouse back. Some men from right around here put together a cavalry and rode up. And they got a two-pound cannon and brought it down on a boat, the first

The Democrats, or white officials were in possession of their offices ... but were soon forced out by a mob of armed negroes, who installed their officers. A meeting of the white Democrats was called ... some three hundred armed negroes assembled in Colfax early in the morning, making play of their weapons, making open threats of violence, and the white people disbanded. This action of the whites seemed to give the negroes more confidence and they began to make open threats to the effect that they would kill all the white men and appropriate the women and girls to fiendish desires. At this juncture ... the white families left their homes, by night or day, as opportunity offered. Then the negroes broke open stores and residences and took everything of value away. In the home of Judge Rutland they found a casket containing the remains of their baby, awaiting shipment for burial in their family burying plot, somewhere in north Louisiana. This they threw into the back yard with face downward and the cover nearly off. Besides this, they committed robbery, rape and other crimes that have escaped my memory.

The white people were so alarmed

at their atrocious acts that they called for help from adjoining parishes, which was liberally responded to ... Nash, the sheriff, from day to day, sent [the blacks] proposals that would settle the matter without bloodshed, all of which they insultingly refused ...

So on Sunday morning, the 13th of April, the whites marched into Colfax ... and with a little twenty-four inch cannon (sent to the white people by Capt. Bill Boardman, owner and captain of the large steel hull steam-boat W.F. Moore,) kept up an effective fire until the afternoon. And here I must say that the cannon mentioned above was manned by a man named Sid Shewman, from the state of New York, and belonged to the artillery of the Federal army during the Civil War. During the engagement in the forenoon he was wounded but stayed by his little gun until victory was won. This northern soldier endeared himself to the people of this parish and was loved and honored for his bravery and patriotism ever after ... At the first volley [the blacks] were terrorized and broke to run. Some took the highway down the river and made their escape, but something like one hundred and twenty-five negroes took refuge in the court house ... where they kept up a continuous fire, wounding three white men ... Then a bundle of fodder was tied to a long pole and a negro prisoner was made to go to the building, light the fodder and hold it to the roof until it blazed ... In a little while a flag of truce was displayed from a window, so at once the firing ceased. At this instant, Mr. James Hadnot, with four other men, went up to capitulate for peace, and here one of the most cowardly acts on the part of the negroes occurred. When they got close to the door of the building, a volley was fired at them from inside, mortally wounding Mr. Hadnot and wounding Frank Moses and others. After this act of perfidy, the negroes attempted to escape in the confusion that followed. The whites were confounded at this treachery, and as the negroes rushed out of the building, they were shot down in their tracks, and those that escaped the first fire were run down in the field and were shot down by men on horseback ...

I have written this from memory and every word of it can be substantiated by only a few living witnesses, who are now old and decrepit men.

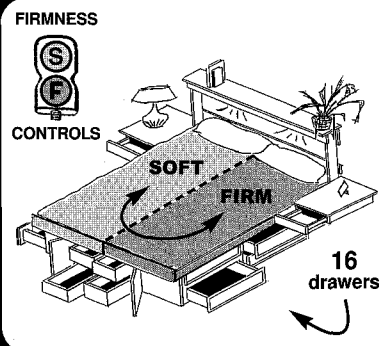
Back at the public library in Colfax, the librarian, Doris Lively, dug up more

than a half dozen theses and term papers about the riot, written by local residents many years after the event. Most reiterated some of the starker details from John I. McCain's reminiscence—the vandalizing of the baby's coffin, the torching of the courthouse roof, the shooting of the white men sent to negotiate peace, the slaughter of the blacks fleeing the burning courthouse. Most also mentioned an epilogue that McCain left out of his account: that a large number of blacks—estimates ranged from about twenty to sixty—who surrendered and were taken prisoner were, that same night, shot or hanged. None of the authors expressed any dismay or even surprise that the prisoners were executed. One, Manie White Johnson, wrote in her master's thesis, "Privilege was given to the negroes to bury their dead but as only a few came to do this, most of the bodies were thrown into trenches, 'buried as it were in the graves dug with their own hands.'" In another passage Johnson referred to the captured as "darkies," and quoted an account that likened the sound of the shooting of forty-eight black prisoners to that of "popcorn in a skillet."

Whites I met in Colfax told a story remarkably similar to those old accounts (minus, for the most part, the racially loaded language), adding the modern detail about how the cannon involved could still be found in town, sitting on Ben Littlepage's lawn. Local blacks, without exception, told me that all they knew was that there had been a big riot in 1873, and that a lot of blacks were killed in it. Several whites recalled that in the 1960s, when the town was excavating the site of the old courthouse in order to build a new one, they disinterred the skeletons of blacks killed in the riot. Dru Richards, then the assistant publisher of *The Chronicle*, Colfax's weekly newspaper, told me that one day, as a child, he was playing in the rubble and found part of a human skull.

I found nothing about the Colfax Riot in any number of encyclopedias, and at the time only one reference to the event on the entire Internet—three sentences on a site maintained by the Louisiana State Museum, in New Orleans.

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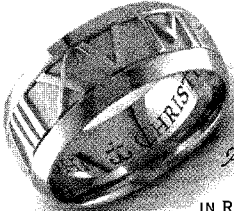


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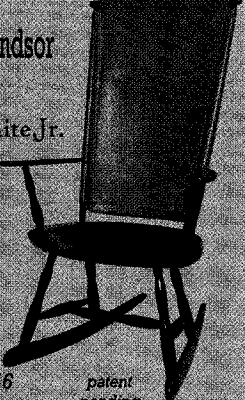


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The Colfax Riot was the bloodiest single instance of racial violence in the Reconstruction era in all of the United States. Disputes over the 1872 election results had produced dual governments at all levels of politics in Louisiana. Fearful that local Democrats would seize power, former slaves under the command of black Civil War veterans and militia officers took over Colfax, the seat of Grant Parish, and a massacre ensued, including the slaughter of about fifty African Americans who had laid down their arms and surrendered.

The last word came to me from no less an authority than the then mayor of Colfax, a white septuagenarian and lifelong resident named Connie Youngblood. "I don't talk about it in speeches or public or anything like that," she told me. "It just makes the blacks upset, and I don't see the point of doing that. But I will tell you two things about the riot: First is that the story about the blacks starting the whole thing by throwing out that baby in the coffin is just pure nonsense. That never happened. The second is that the next day the whites went to the blacks and said that if they had participated in the riot and if they stepped forward now, they would be granted pardons. So a bunch of the blacks came forward—I don't know how many, maybe a hundred—and the whites shot them instead."

Toward the end of my visit to Colfax, I took a walk through the town cemetery, which lies across Main Street from the library and the courthouse. Like many small-town southern cemeteries, it is one of the nicest spots in town—granite stones, chiseled and polished, interspersed with solid, proud slate markers more than a century old, all of them widely and evenly spaced apart. And, as in many small-town southern cemeteries, every last person buried there is white. There is not, I've been told, a racially integrated burial ground in all of Grant Parish.

I strolled slowly through the cemetery, perusing names and epitaphs, pausing for a moment to inspect a new grave that had been dug that very morning. Glancing up, I spotted—across all the neat rows of neat headstones, and standing near a stately old tree—a

marble obelisk, a dozen feet high, towering over every other marker. I made my way over to it, picked some lichen off the weathered inscription, and squinted in the afternoon sun to read it.

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE
ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF
THE HEROES
STEPHEN DECATUR PARISH
JAMES WEST HADNOT
SIDNEY HARRIS
WHO FELL IN THE COLFAX
RIOT FIGHTING FOR
WHITE SUPREMACY
APRIL 13, 1873

It is the frankest monument I have ever seen.

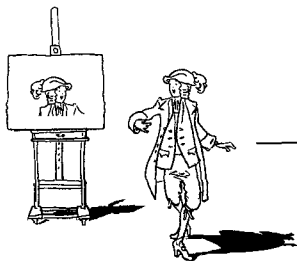
As I was leaving town for the last time, I passed by Ben Littlepage's house. I decided I'd stop and see the famous Colfax Riot cannon, envisioning, somehow, a grand old armament of the kind I had seen in abundance at West Point and a half dozen Civil War battlefields. I pulled into his driveway and looked across his front and back lawns, but it was nowhere to be seen; I figured it must have been carted off. I was about to go when Mrs. Littlepage drove up. I told her why I had come, and asked what had become of the riot cannon.

"It's right there," she said, pointing toward the carport.

"Where?"

"There," she said. "Right next to the car." The car she referred to was a little red-plastic vehicle with a yellow roof, the kind favored by toddlers everywhere; and there next to it—partially hidden behind it—was the cannon. I walked up to it; the carriage and muzzle reached just halfway to my knee. So this, I thought, was the cannon that, according to legend, had been brought down by the first ironclad on the Red River, that had come with its own Yankee soldier because no one else knew how to fire it, that had been credited with driving perhaps a couple of hundred men out of the Grant Parish courthouse and killing an untold number of them. It looked as much like a toy as the plastic car that dwarfed it. ▀

Richard Rubin's book Confederacy of Silence: A True Tale of the New Old South (2002) was released in paperback in June.



THE PUZZLER

by EMILY COX and HENRY RATHVON

Word Magic

Ten answers undergo a transformation when they enter the diagram. The process is magical and is abetted, reputedly, by 39 Across. Clue answers include eight capitalized words.

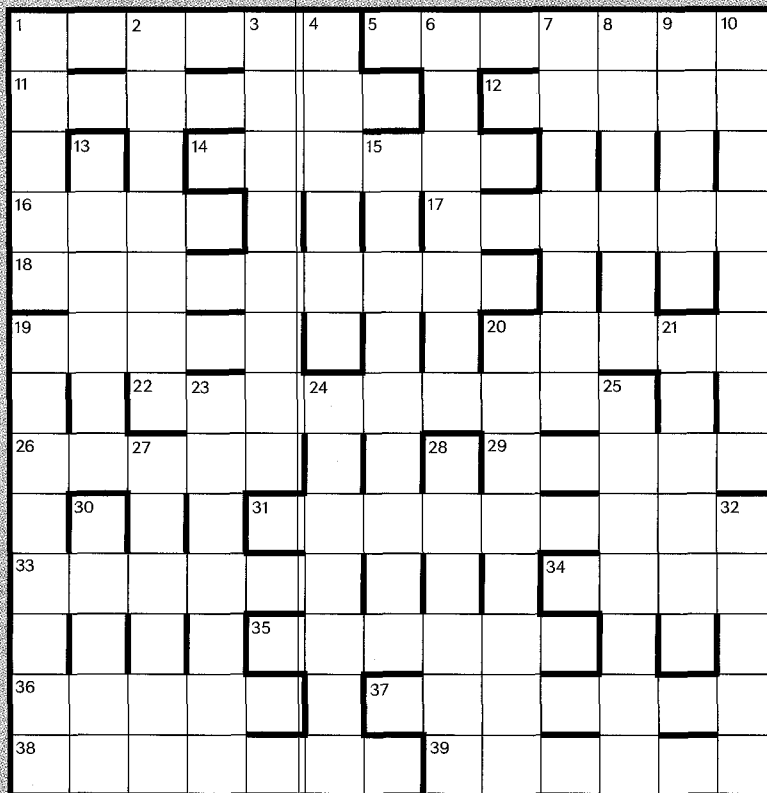
Last month's Puzzler solution is on page 148.

ACROSS

1. Mrs. Trollope discards English money that's out of use (6)
5. Reportedly sacked spot in capital city (7)
11. Each supporter I would censure (7)
12. Harmony in E, in tempo (5)
14. Puts up with secret maneuvering (6)
16. Graduate in contracting material (4)
17. Around one, I shoot a lizard (6)
18. Outside of park, sheep don't have soot (9)
19. Vandals grabbing \$1,000 slabs (5)
20. Furtively move ship's front line (5)
22. Without taking nap, be for veggies (4,5)
26. Alchemic stuff Greek character located in 1050 (5)
29. End of movie grasped by only Italian director (5)
31. Star comedian, to a grandma eating peanut butter (3,6)
33. Like a tough course in university Donahue left (6)
34. The Spanish acquiring a part of Asia (4)
35. Heard bird speech that's simplified (6)
36. Dope's joke (5)
37. That dude keeps playing bop in part of a joint (7)
38. Wisconsin town treated Shane OK (7)
39. See instructions

DOWN

1. Oppressive air, almost all of a Bach piece (5)
2. Cracking nuts, Uma falls (7)
3. Wild party excitement after college (8)



4. Bourgeoisie clearly embraces century in France (6)
6. Newspaper piece or bit after the first (7)
7. Actress in *Cool Blaze* (7)
8. Hairstyle divided by a hat from the top (2,4)
9. Doing quite well at running topless (5)
10. Chess-playing computer's bleep, due to Spooner (4,4)
13. Penning Latin, make part of a sentence (6)
15. Whack pig down with piece of siding (9)
19. Bee in swarm following drone in abnormal curve (8)
20. Magnificent tail a pal braided (8)
21. Extract victory without delay (6)
23. Bacon is processed for Oreo manufacturer (7)
24. Doctor has boil to get rid of (7)
25. Then, a politician's first fight for platform (7)
27. Lunatic ran the Middle Eastern hub (6)
28. Stir about one parakeet (6)
30. Extra bowling mark (5)
32. Flower sampler with lid removed (5)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving visit www.theatlantic.com/issues/puzzclue.htm or send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.

The Atlantic Monthly (ISSN 1072-7825) is published monthly except for combined issues in January/February and July/August by The Atlantic Monthly Group, 77 N. Washington St., Boston, MA 02114 (617-854-7700). Periodicals postage paid at Boston, MA, Toronto, Ont., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription queries: Atlantic Customer Care, Box 37585, Boone, IA 50037-0585 (or call 800-234-2411). Privacy: We make portions of our customer list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services we believe you may enjoy. If you do not want to receive this information, please write to the Customer Care address above. Advertising: 200 Madison Ave., 20th floor, NY, NY 10016 (646-695-8500). Circulation: 600 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20037 (202-266-7205). Subscriptions: one year \$19.95 in the U.S. and poss.; add \$8.00 in Canada, includes GST (123209926); add \$15.00 elsewhere. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement 0261327. Back issues: send \$7.50 per copy to The Atlantic, Back Issues, 1900 Industrial Park Dr., Federalsburg, MD 21632 (or call 410-754-8219). Vol. 292, No. 1, July/August 2003. Copyright © 2003, by The Atlantic Monthly Group. All rights reserved. Postmaster: Send address changes to Atlantic Address Change, Box 37585, Boone, IA 50037-0585.



WORD FUGITIVES

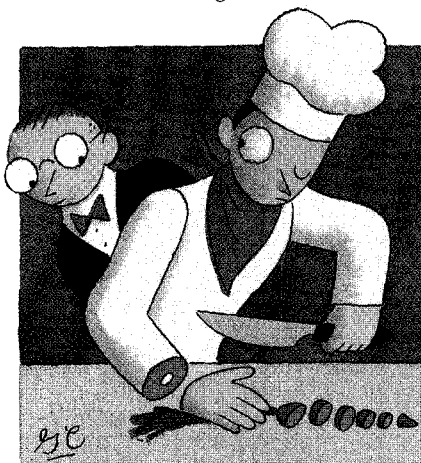
by BARBARA WALLRAFF

In March we requested a word for a "tendency to make more mistakes ... if a very critical person is watching." Along with aspiring words, a flood of descriptions of what it's like to have this affliction poured in. For instance, Javan Kienzle, of Birmingham, Michigan, wrote, "It is near impossible for me to work in the kitchen if anyone else is in there—this from my childhood when my mother always commented on the way I did things. If anyone watches me work, I inevitably end up cutting myself, burning myself, dropping something, or breaking something." Peter Morris, of Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, wrote, "I often find myself unable to sign my own name when being stared at by an incommunicative bank teller or bureaucrat."

Two readers reported that according to *They Have a Word for It*, by Howard Rheingold, in German *fusselig* has the meaning wanted. A few others pointed out that among sports fans, *choke* nearly fills the bill. But readers also came up with a wide range of apt new coinages, though some were for the state or process or cause or effect of bungling under supervision rather than for the tendency to bungle, as requested. Rita Kennedy, of Rockland, Massachusetts, suggested *abutter-fingers*; Rebecca Cosgrove, of New Milford, Connecticut, *botchful eye*; Vera K. Cobb, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, *bungle of nerves*; and Lynn Herrick, of Northville, Michigan, *glarer-prone*. Several readers suggested *sage fright*; Patrick Green, of Dripping Springs, Texas, *stuporvised*; and Art Scherer, of Efland, North Carolina, *tsk-oriented*. Jim Tanner, of Fort Collins, Colorado, wrote, "I tend to become particularly witless while pursuing tasks in the presence of a critical witness; hence my witlessness is compounded—hence *witnesslessness*."

And top honors go to David Sonstroem, of Storrs, Connecticut, for his deft and witty term *carper-fumble syndrome*.

The second word fugitive sought in March was one meaning "to go to do something and return having absent-mindedly done one or more other things instead." Matt Mayberry, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, had no verb to suggest, though he acutely feels the need for one. He wrote, "My colleagues and I were discussing just this tendency. I work in a history museum surrounded by a wide variety of fascinating artifacts, documents, problems, and projects. We often set out from our work areas determined to accomplish one thing, only to return some significant time later



having taken a circuitous route through the building. When we do return to our desks, not only is our original task unfulfilled, but we often can't recall why we left in the first place."

Mike Olesak, of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, wrote, "I just saw a comic of Beetle Bailey in which General Halftrack gets sidetracked when he leaves the kitchen to go get the paper and returns, nine distracted frames later, with a flyswatter. I've experienced this phenomenon myself. It seems as though the mind gets spaced out on tangents; for a split second you seem to be in another world. So my submission would be *nether-minded*."

Task turned up in many submissions. For instance, that clever Jim Tanner,

coiner of *witnesslessness*, dubbed the "much-achieved if not much-sought-after capability" in question *muddletasking*. Sam Putnam, of Vallejo, California, suggested *alti-tasking*; Janet Watson, of Norwell, Massachusetts, *faulty-tasking*; and a number of readers *mistask*.

And here Marshall Arbitman, of New York City, takes top honors for his straight-to-the-point coinage *onthe-waylaid*.

Now SRIRAM KHE, of Eugene, Oregon, writes, "I wonder if there is a word for what happens when teachers like me grade papers at the end of terms: the incorrect information in students' papers makes me begin to question my own knowledge. For instance, after grading quite a few papers I begin to ask myself if it is *effect* or *affect*; does Switzerland really border a sea? Is there a word to describe this acute sense of 'unlearning'?"

And BRUCE GELDER, of Iowa City, Iowa, writes, "I'd like a word to denote the tendency of traffic to cluster around and behind highway patrol cars on rural interstates because no one dares to pass the trooper vehicle at a significant speed (that is, the speed at which the car was traveling before it caught up with the patrol car). I commute daily through rural Iowa and see this occur frequently."

Send words that meet Sriram Khe's or Bruce Gelder's needs to *Word Fugitives*, The Atlantic Monthly, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, MA 02114, or visit the *Word Fugitives* page on our Web site, at www.theatlantic.com/fugitives. Submissions must be received by August 31. Use the same addresses to submit word fugitives that you'd like The Atlantic's help in finding. Letters become the property of *Word Fugitives* and may be edited.

Readers whose queries are published and those whose words are singled out for top honors will each receive, with our thanks, a selection of recent autographed books by Atlantic authors. The next installment's correspondents will be sent *The Pleasures of Slow Food*, by Corby Kummer, and *Reefer Madness*, by Eric Schlosser.

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transformed
HER FACE.

Gave her light. And now it is in my jewelry box. The lines, the cut, the fiery glow.

ECHOES OF THE PAST.

And maybe I'll wear it or maybe I won't but you see it's now up to me. Mine. My piece of her...

Worth goes way beyond price. Beyond simply owning a really valuable necklace. It includes every detail of that necklace. Like the craftsmanship of the clasp or the events to which it was worn. It includes the story about how it was given to your mother. It's emotional.

This is why Chubb has been known to go to great lengths to help replace items like this. If you have to make a claim, we won't hassle you.

For 120 years, Chubb has understood the true value of fine homes, automobiles, precious art and extraordinary jewelry. Because you know what it's really about. So do we.

For more information about Chubb coverage, ask your agent, call Chubb at 1.877.60.CHUBB or visit our website at www.chubb.com.

COVERAGE BEYOND YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Insurance for homes • autos • art • jewelry • yachts • business



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